

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 75

16p

The illustration depicts a dramatic space battle. A large, orange, ribbed spaceship with a blue spherical cockpit is shown in the upper left, angled towards the right. It appears to be firing or has just fired, as evidenced by a large, vibrant explosion of red and yellow energy in the upper right quadrant. Below this explosion, a dark, jagged, and rocky celestial body, identified as Doomrock, dominates the lower right. The rock has several small, white, rectangular openings or windows. A bright yellow energy beam or laser cuts across the scene from the upper right towards the rock. The background is a deep blue space filled with smaller, distant stars and some floating debris.

DOOMROCK

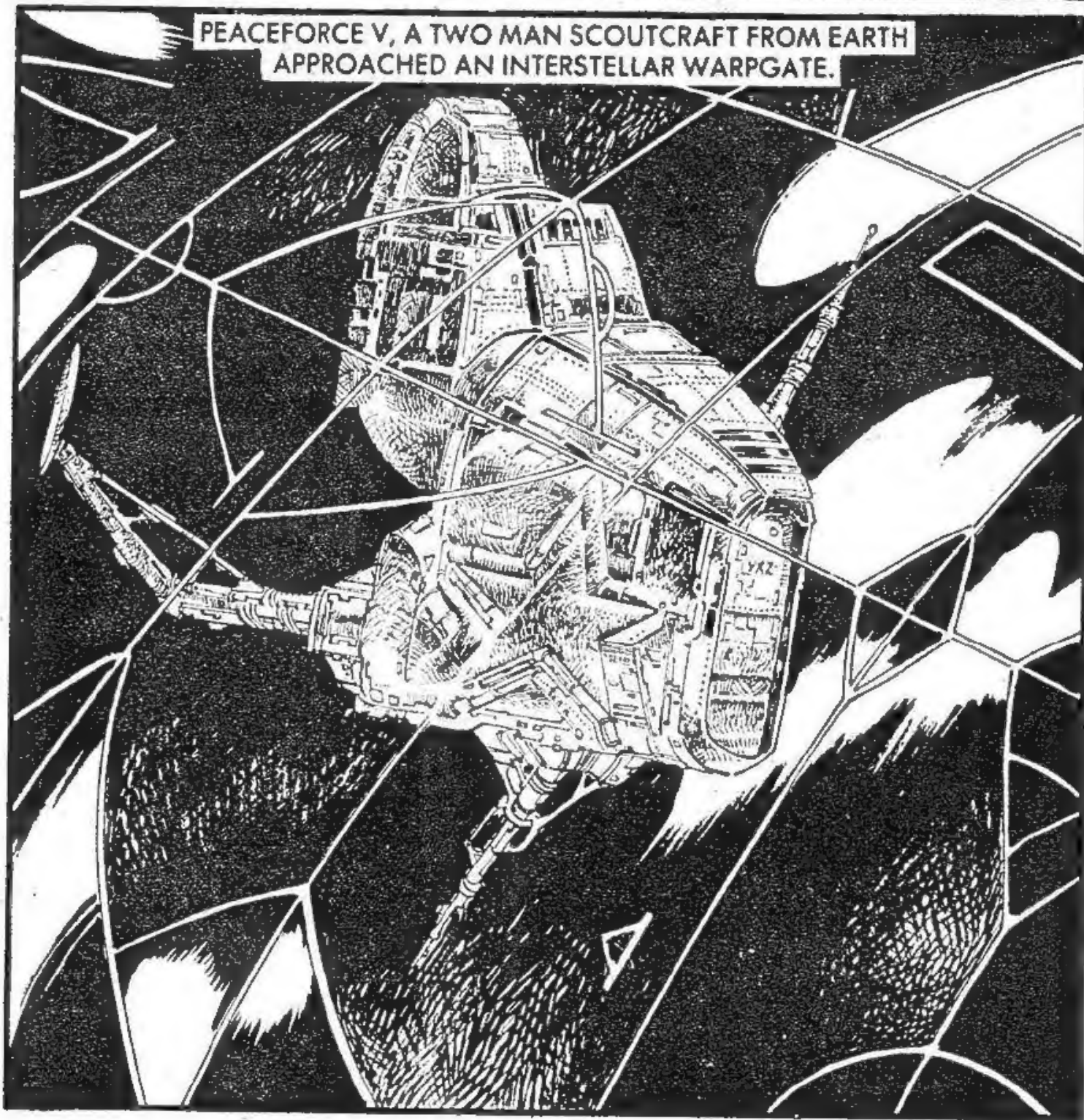
STARBLAZER



WARS AND CONFLICTS CONTINUED WITH THE YEARS RIGHT INTO THE 23RD CENTURY. BY THIS TIME A VAST NETWORK OF INTERSTELLAR WARGATES EXISTED TO CARRY CRAFT FROM GALAXY TO GALAXY. PATROLLING THESE KEY POSTS WERE SCOUTCRAFT, OF EARTH PEACEFORCE, THAT KEPT A WATCHFUL EYE FOR UNAUTHORISED ENTRIES. MOST PERSISTENT OF BORDER OFFENDERS WERE THE SHABOT, A MILITARISTIC, CRUEL, CONQUERING RACE. AS THE SHABOT PROBLEM ESCALATED, THE SUICIDE SQUAD, A DETAIL OF MILITARY MISFITS, WERE SUMMONED TO FIND A WAY TO DEFEAT ...

DOOMROCK

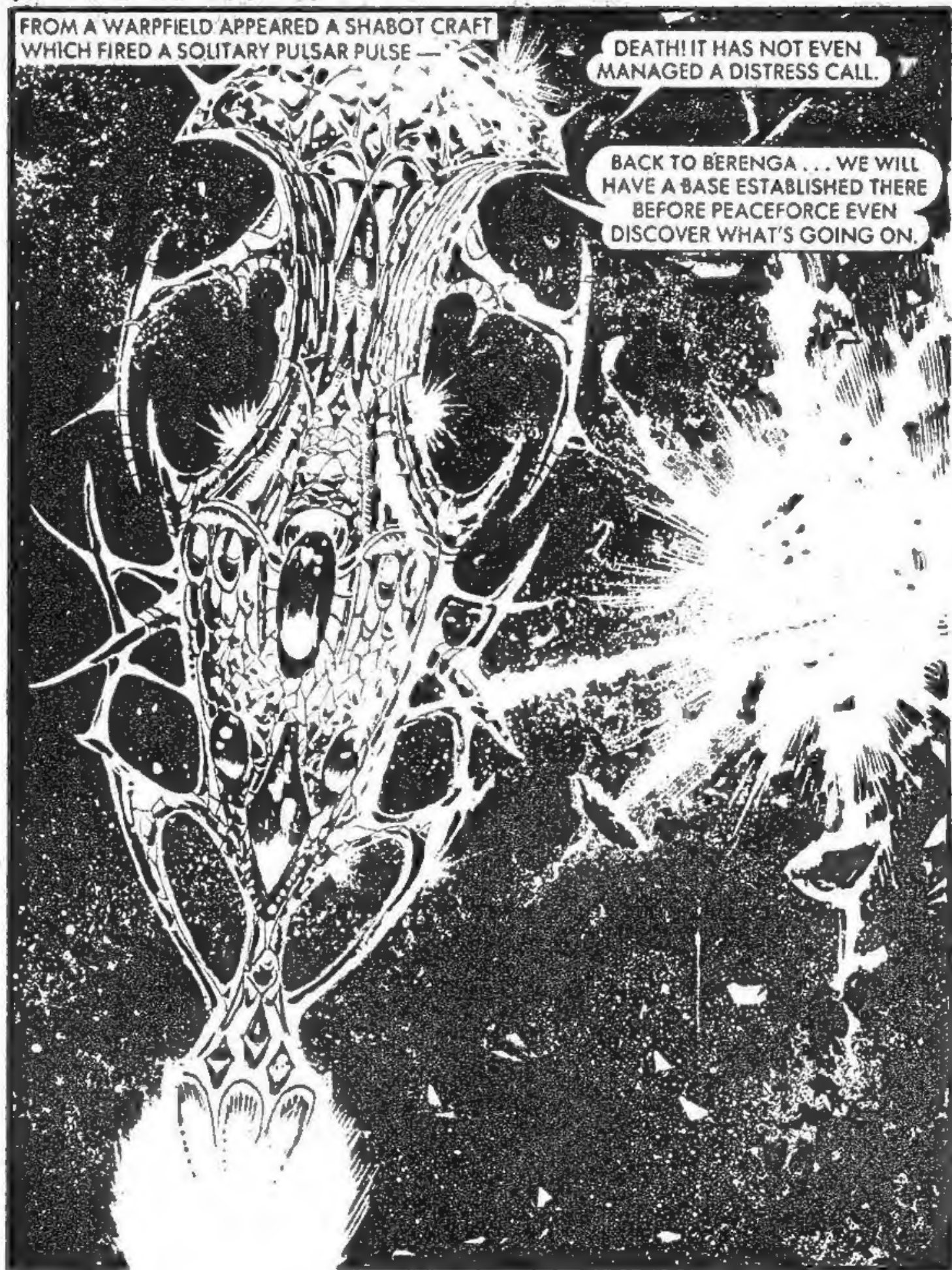
PEACEFORCE V, A TWO MAN SCOUTCRAFT FROM EARTH
APPROACHED AN INTERSTELLAR WARGATE.



FROM A WARPFIELD APPEARED A SHABOT CRAFT
WHICH FIRED A SOLITARY PULSAR PULSE —

DEATH! IT HAS NOT EVEN
MANAGED A DISTRESS CALL.

BACK TO BERENGA . . . WE WILL
HAVE A BASE ESTABLISHED THERE
BEFORE PEACEFORCE EVEN
DISCOVER WHAT'S GOING ON.



ON EARTH, PEACEFORCE, ALARMED BY THE FAILURE OF YET ANOTHER SCOUTCRAFT TO RETURN, SENT FOR THE SUICIDE SQUAD.

THE SHABOT ARE IN THE AREA OF BERENGA. EVERY SCOUTCRAFT HAS FAILED TO RETURN, SO IT IS UP TO YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT IS GOING ON!

YOU CANNOT RISK A LARGE FLEET BECAUSE OF FUEL SHORTAGES, SO WE ARE SENT IN WITH NO BACK UP!

LIEUTENANT STEVE TERRY, SERGEANT HENRY, VIDOP BELLO AND GUNNER GEE MADE UP THE SQUAD ... A SQUAD NOT EXPECTED TO RETURN.

SO THIS IS OUR CRAFT! HEAVILY ARMED OR NOT, IT'S US AGAINST THE SHABOT.



ONCE IN SPACE THE SQUAD HAD A CONFERENCE.

BERENGA SPACE IS THICK WITH SHABOT.
OUR CRAFT CAN'T GET IN OR OUT
WITHOUT BEING DETECTED. WHERE
ELSE DO WE GET INFORMATION?

WE COULD MONITOR THEIR TRAFFIC...
THAT MEANS A SYSTEMS CLOSEDOWN
AND SILENT RUNNING.

THE PULVERIS DUSTCLOUD!
THAT SHOULD FOIL DETECTOR
GEAR, AND WE COULD SETTLE
ON SOME ROCK AT THE FAR
PERIMETER.



SENSOR BLACKOUT . . . QUICK!

SHABOT PATROL! WE'RE STILL IN
EARTH SPACE.



ON THE SHABOT CRAFT—

ANOTHER EARTH SCOUTSHIP . . . I
SHALL ADD TO MY NUMBER OF KILLS.



THE SHABOT CRAFT DISINTEGRATED—



THE IONISED PARTICLES IN THE DUST CLOUD CONFUSED SCANNERS.

THE DUST IS THINNING. IT'S
GOOD TO SEE STARS AGAIN.

I'LL SETTLE FOR THAT
ROCK—IT'S BIG ENOUGH.

THE PEACEFORCE VESSEL SOFTLANDED—

OKAY—CAMOUFLAGE
THE SHIP.





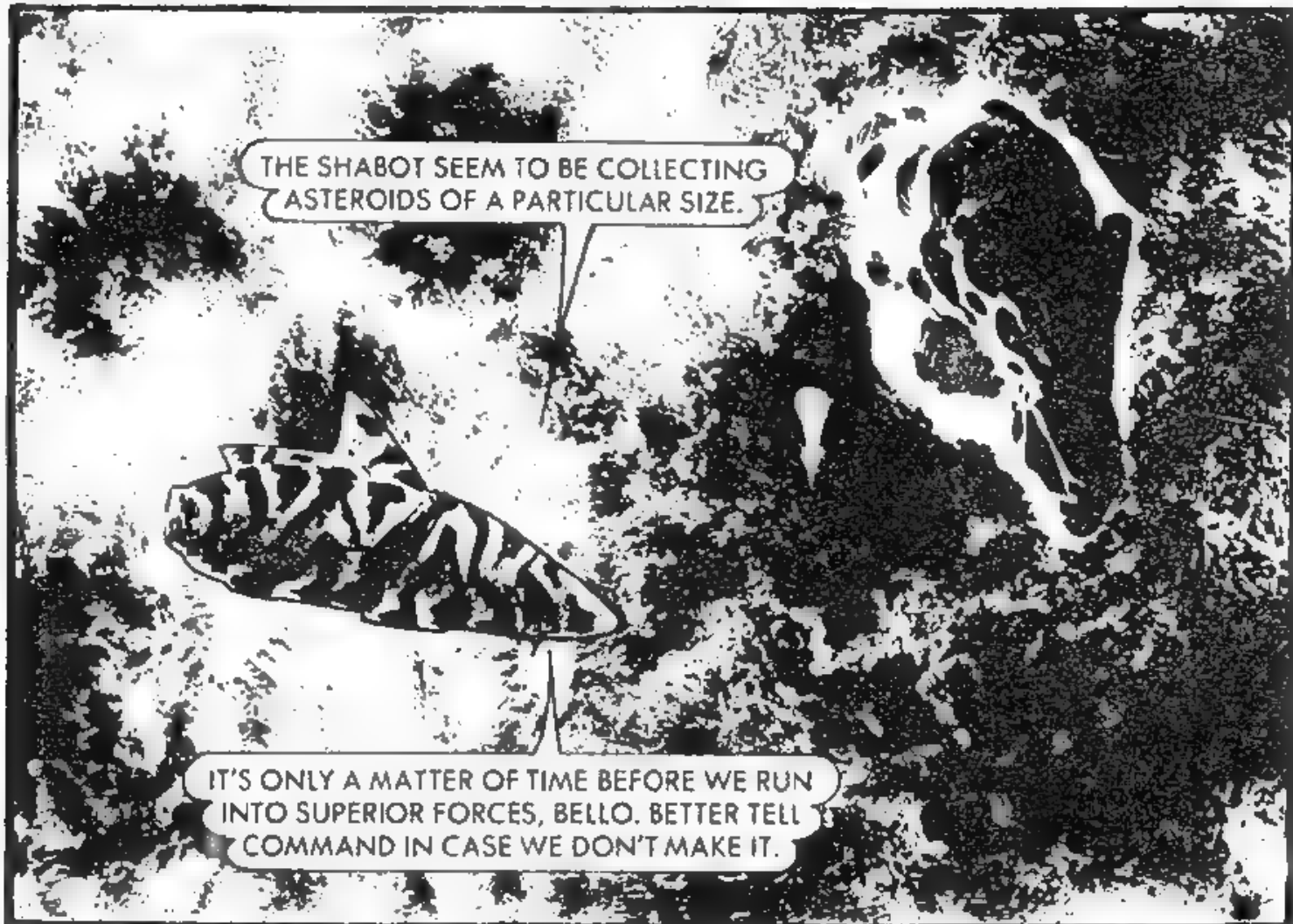
THEY SETTLED DOWN TO WAIT, AND AFTER 7 UNITS—





I'LL KEEP THE SPEED DOWN. WE HAVE TO FOLLOW JUST OUT OF DETECTOR RANGE.

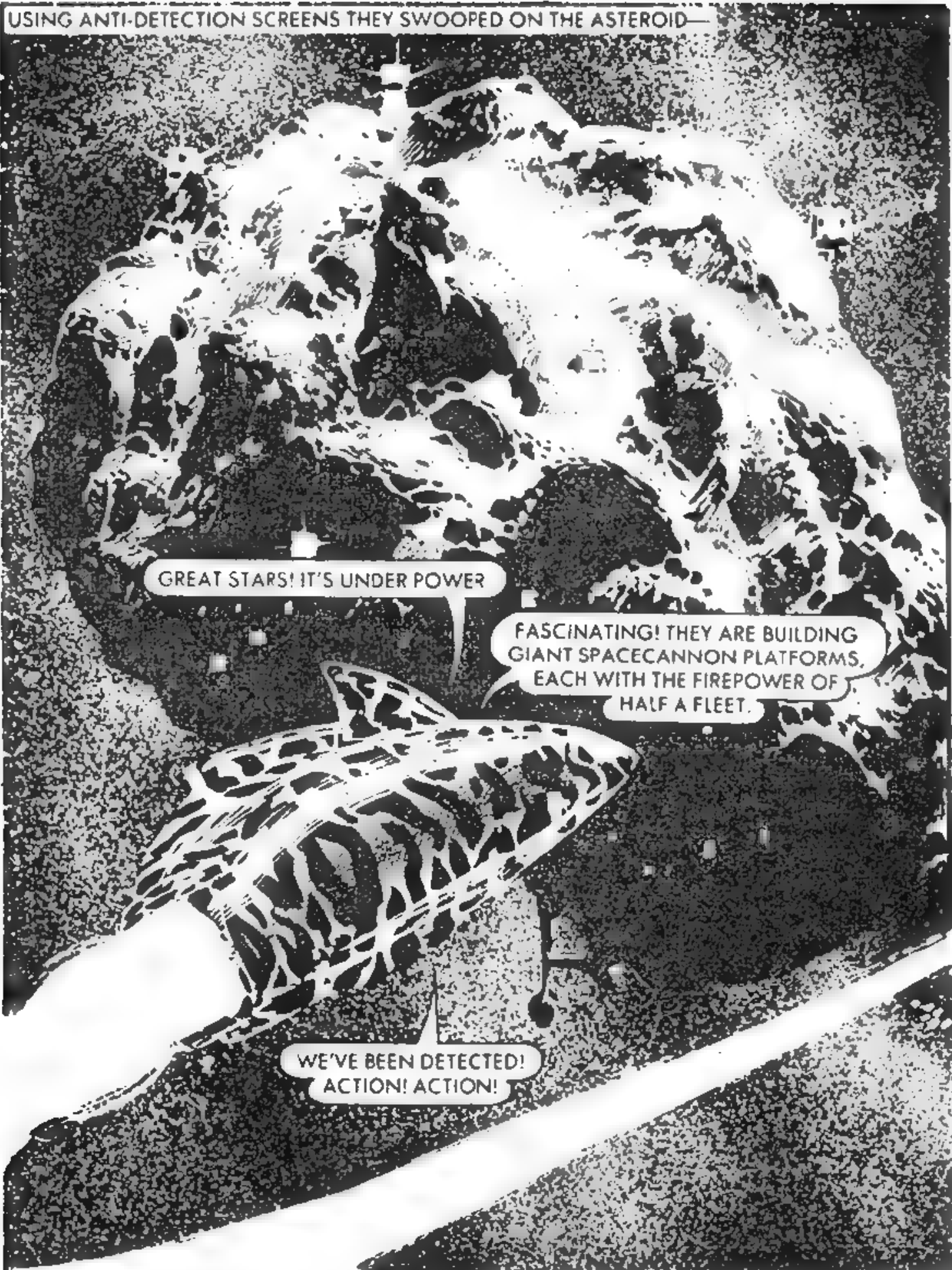
THEY'RE DEFINITELY HEADING FOR BERENGA.



THE SHABOT SEEM TO BE COLLECTING ASTEROIDS OF A PARTICULAR SIZE.

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WE RUN INTO SUPERIOR FORCES, BELLO. BETTER TELL COMMAND IN CASE WE DON'T MAKE IT.

USING ANTI-DETECTION SCREENS THEY SWOOPED ON THE ASTEROID—



GREAT STARS! IT'S UNDER POWER

FASCINATING! THEY ARE BUILDING
GIANT SPACECANNON PLATFORMS,
EACH WITH THE FIREPOWER OF
HALF A FLEET.

WE'VE BEEN DETECTED!
ACTION! ACTION!

MESSAGE GOT THROUGH, STEVE.
I GOT AN ANSWERING BLIP FROM COMMAND.

I'D LIKE TO GET A CLOSER LOOK, STEVE, BUT
THEIR ARTILLERY WILL OUT-RANGE OURS.

IT MUST BE HOLLOW WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE
NUMBER OF CREW TO WORK SO MANY
SPACECANNON. YOU RECKON IT MIGHT BE
POSSIBLE TO CRACK IT UP?

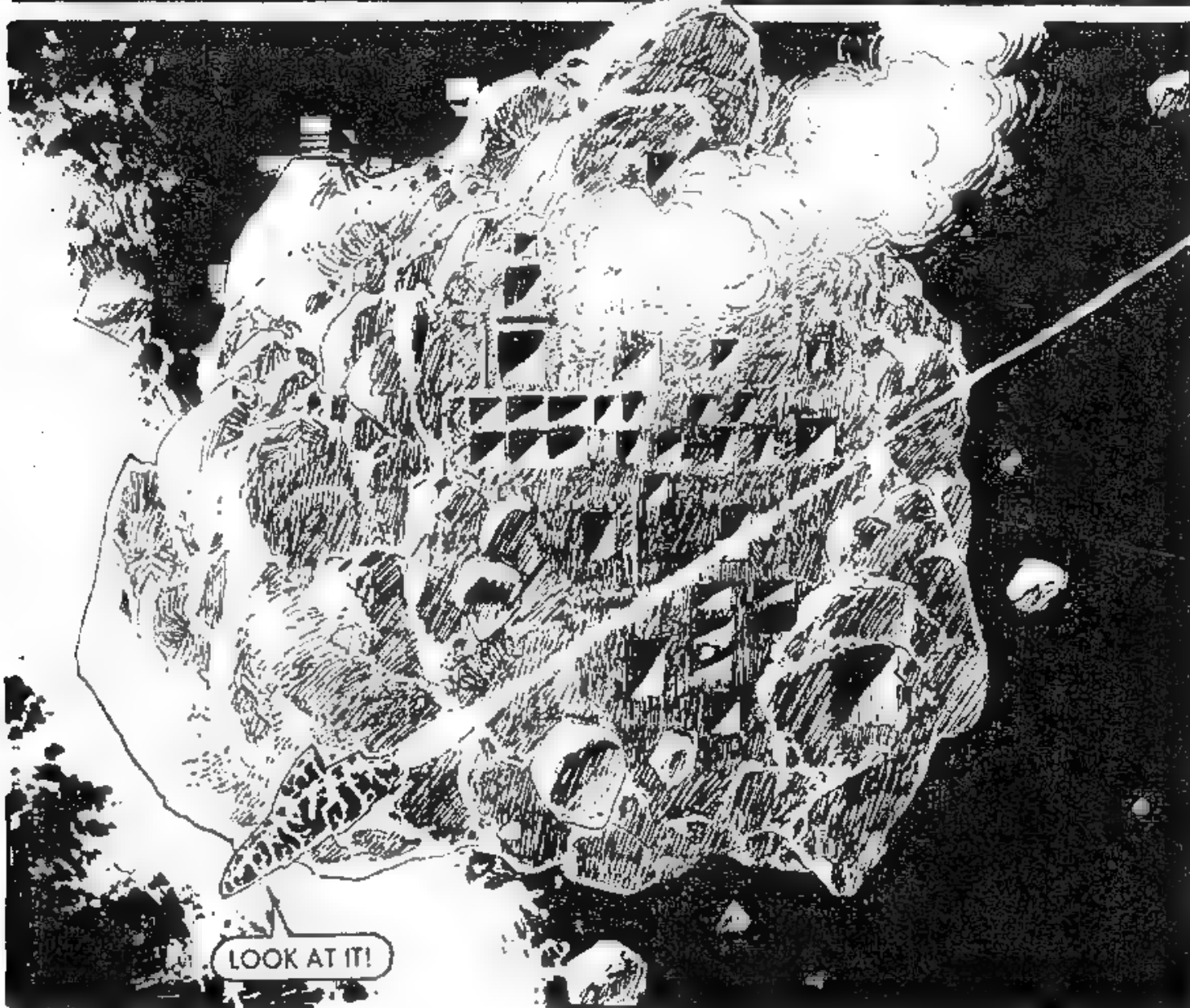
THEY'LL PULVERISE US BEFORE WE
GET NEAR ENOUGH—THEY'VE STARTED
ALREADY.



STEVE TOOK THE CRAFT IN CLOSE—



THE TORPS STRUCK HOME—



LOOK AT IT!

A JARRING SHOOK THE PEACEFORCE VESSEL—



IT WAS THE SHOCK WAVE FROM THE EXPLOSION THAT SPLIT THE ASTEROID.



HOW WE GOT OUT OF THAT I'LL NEVER KNOW.

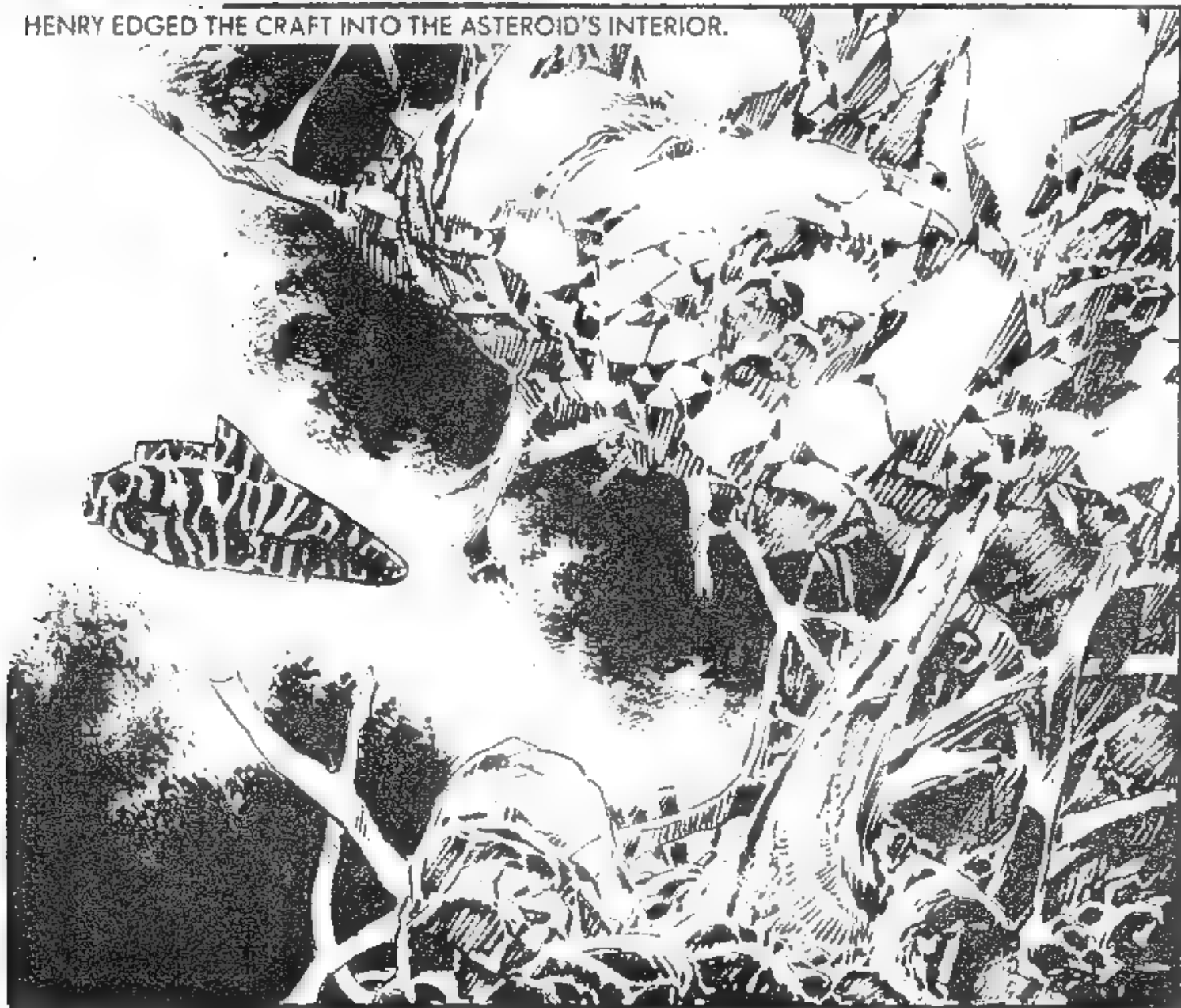
THE SELF-SEALING TOOK CARE OF MOST HOLES—THE ASTEROID'S ATMOSPHERE AND ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY COLLAPSED.

STEVE CRUISED CAUTIOUSLY AT EXTREME RANGE TILL THE ASTEROID'S REMAINING ARMOURY WAS EXHAUSTED.



HENRY—TAKE HER INTO THAT PORT.

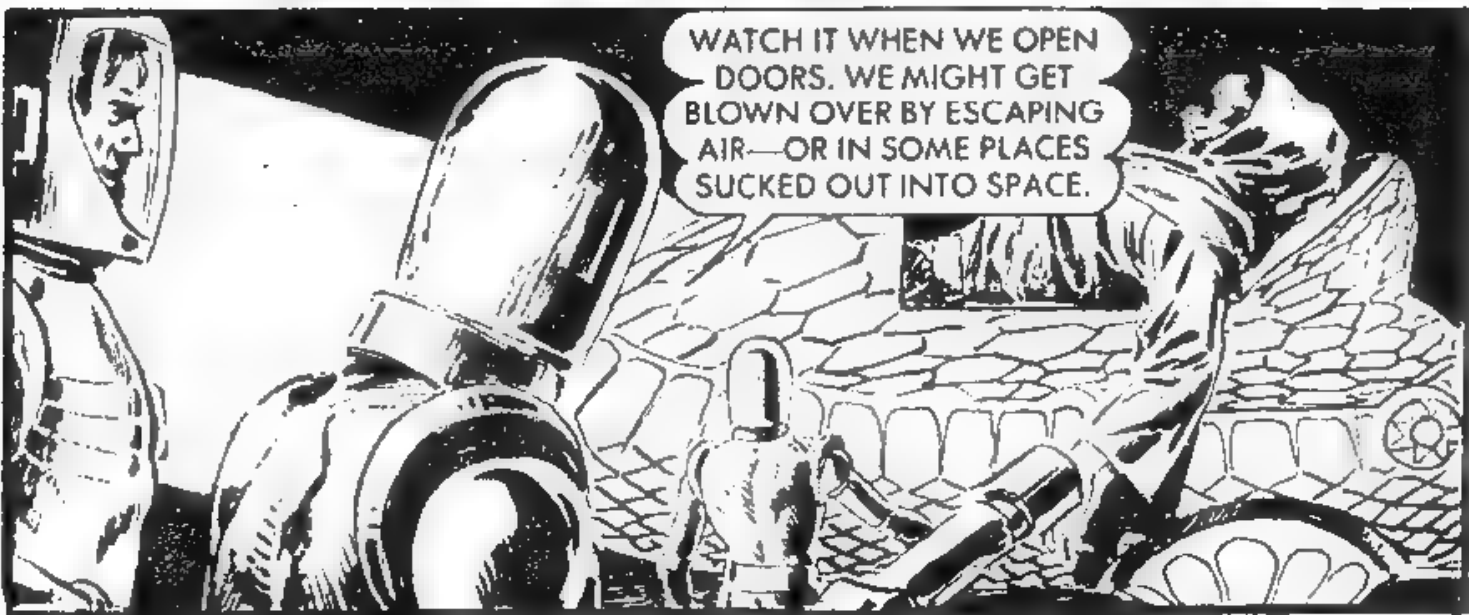
HENRY EDGED THE CRAFT INTO THE ASTEROID'S INTERIOR.



ONCE SAFELY DOCKED, AN INVESTIGATION BEGAN.



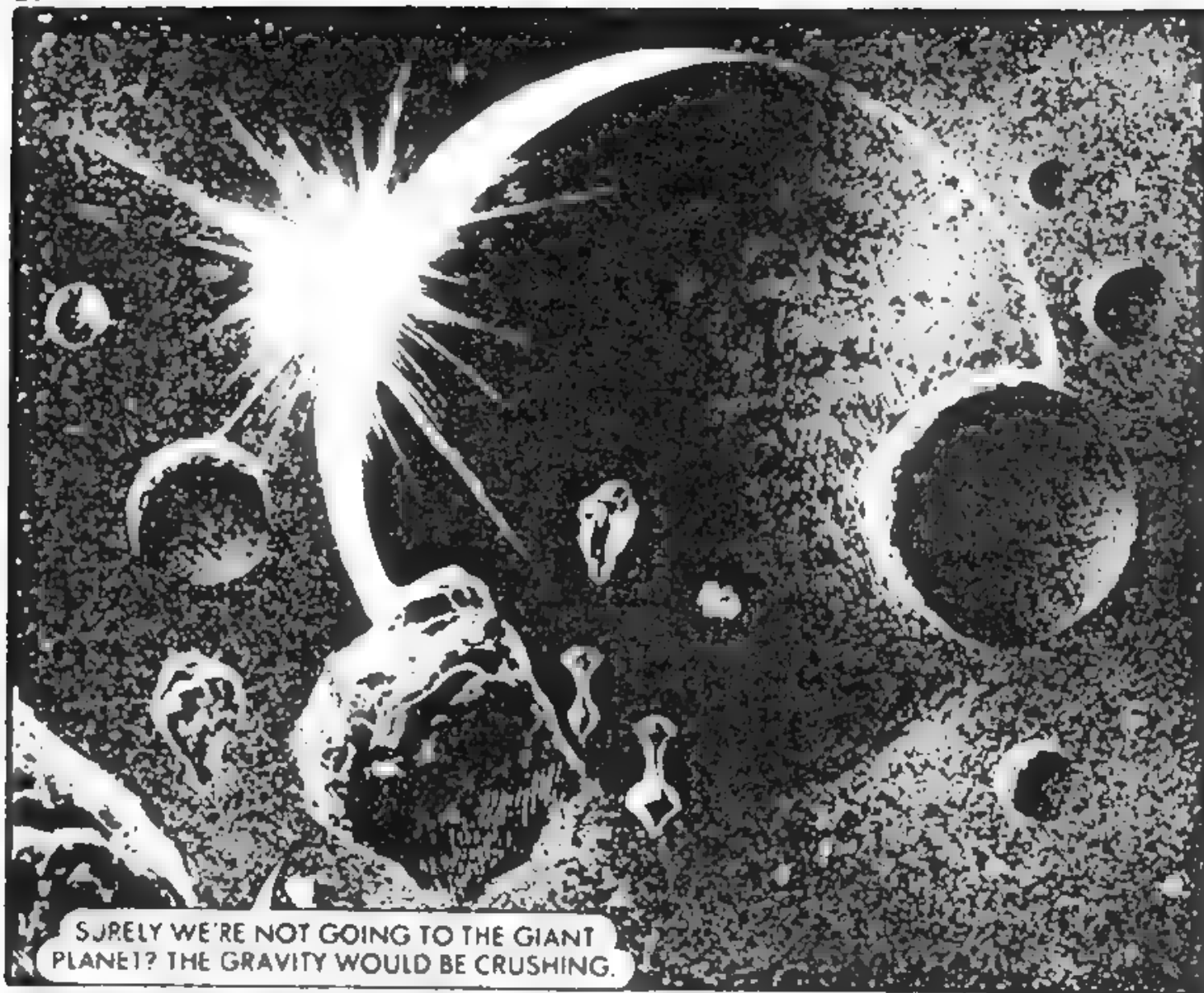
WATCH IT WHEN WE OPEN
DOORS. WE MIGHT GET
BLOWN OVER BY ESCAPING
AIR—OR IN SOME PLACES
SUCKED OUT INTO SPACE.



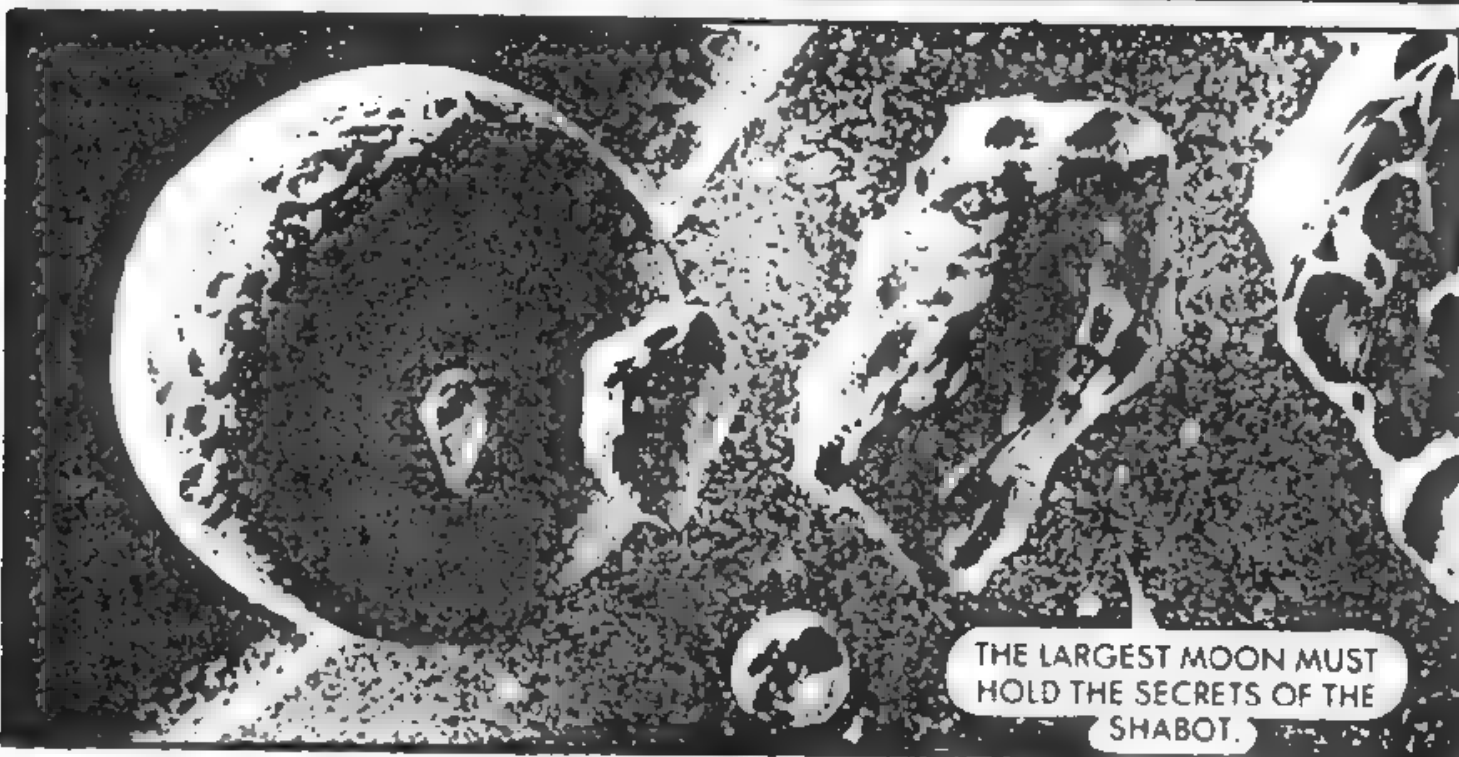


AFTER A LONG SLOW JOURNEY, THE ASTEROID REACHED THE BERENGA CONSTELLATION.





SURELY WE'RE NOT GOING TO THE GIANT
PLANET? THE GRAVITY WOULD BE CRUSHING.

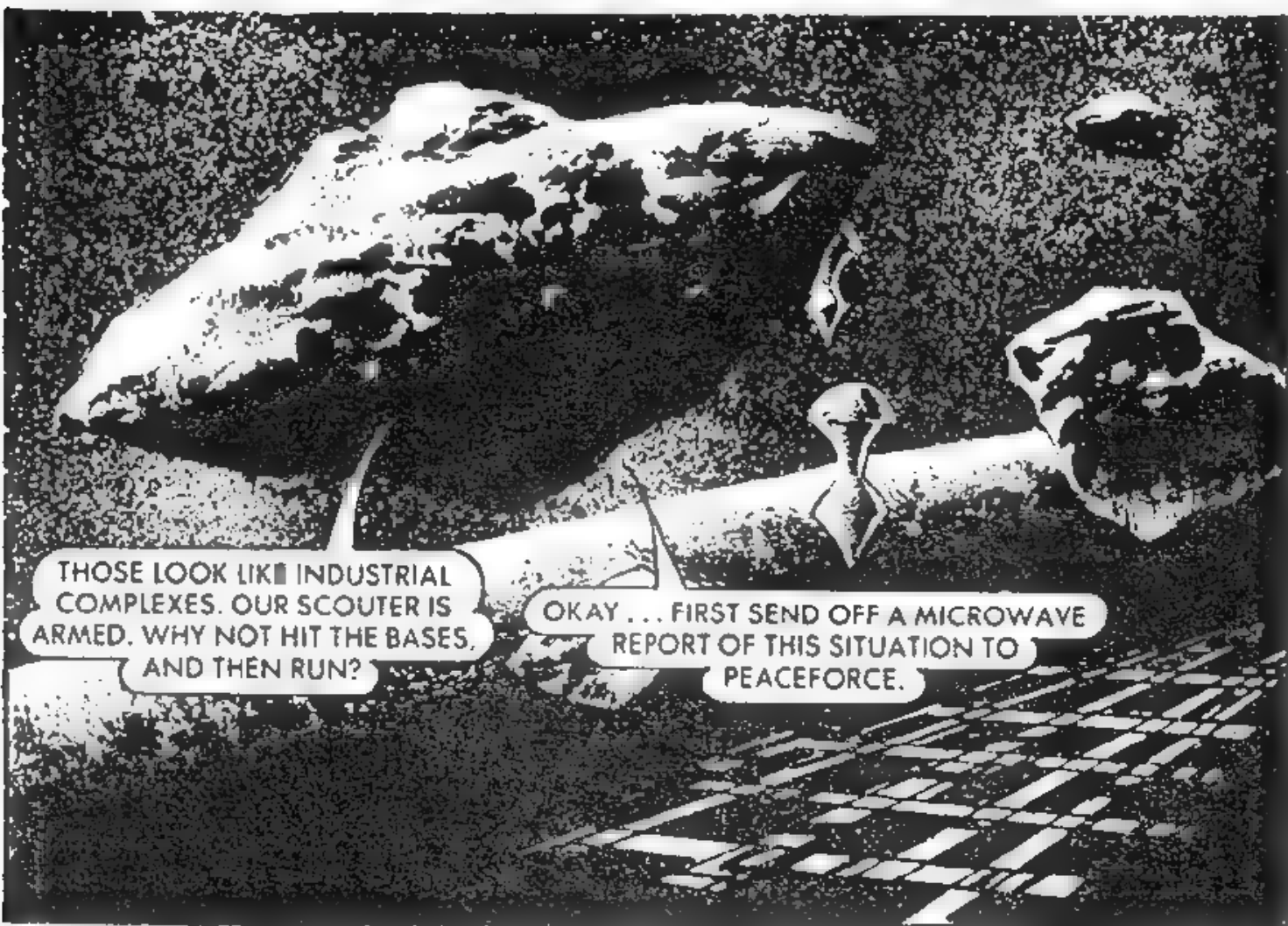


THE LARGEST MOON MUST
HOLD THE SECRETS OF THE
SHABOT.



WHEN THEY COME TO CHECK
THIS ASTEROID, WE'RE SUNK.

NOT NECESSARILY ...



THOSE LOOK LIKE INDUSTRIAL
COMPLEXES. OUR SCOUTER IS
ARMED. WHY NOT HIT THE BASES,
AND THEN RUN?

OKAY ... FIRST SEND OFF A MICROWAVE
REPORT OF THIS SITUATION TO
PEACEFORCE.



THE DEADLY PROTON TORPS HEADED FOR THEIR TARGETS.

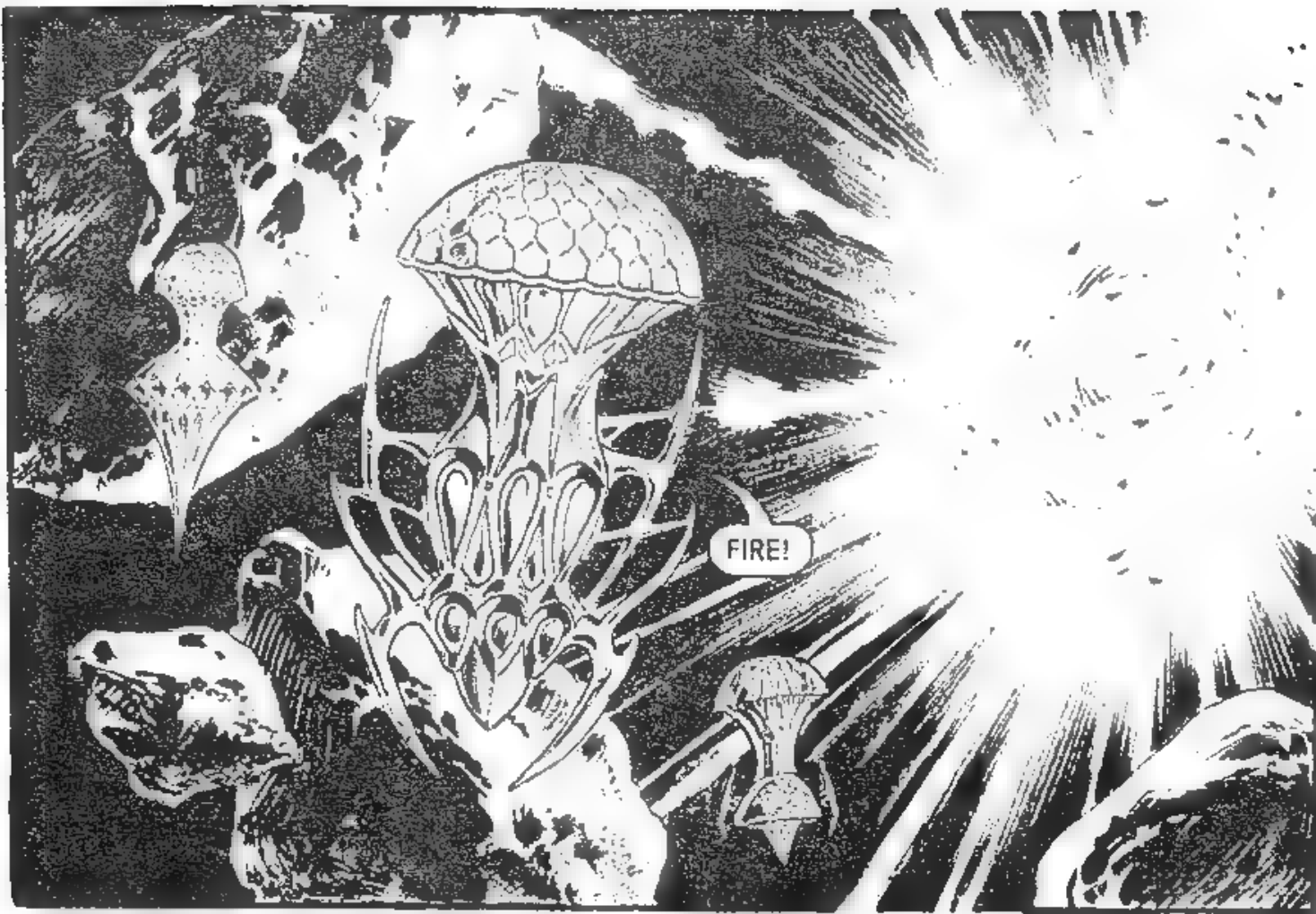


AT THE SHABOT BASE —

ALIEN CRAFT ON
ASTEROID DD2.

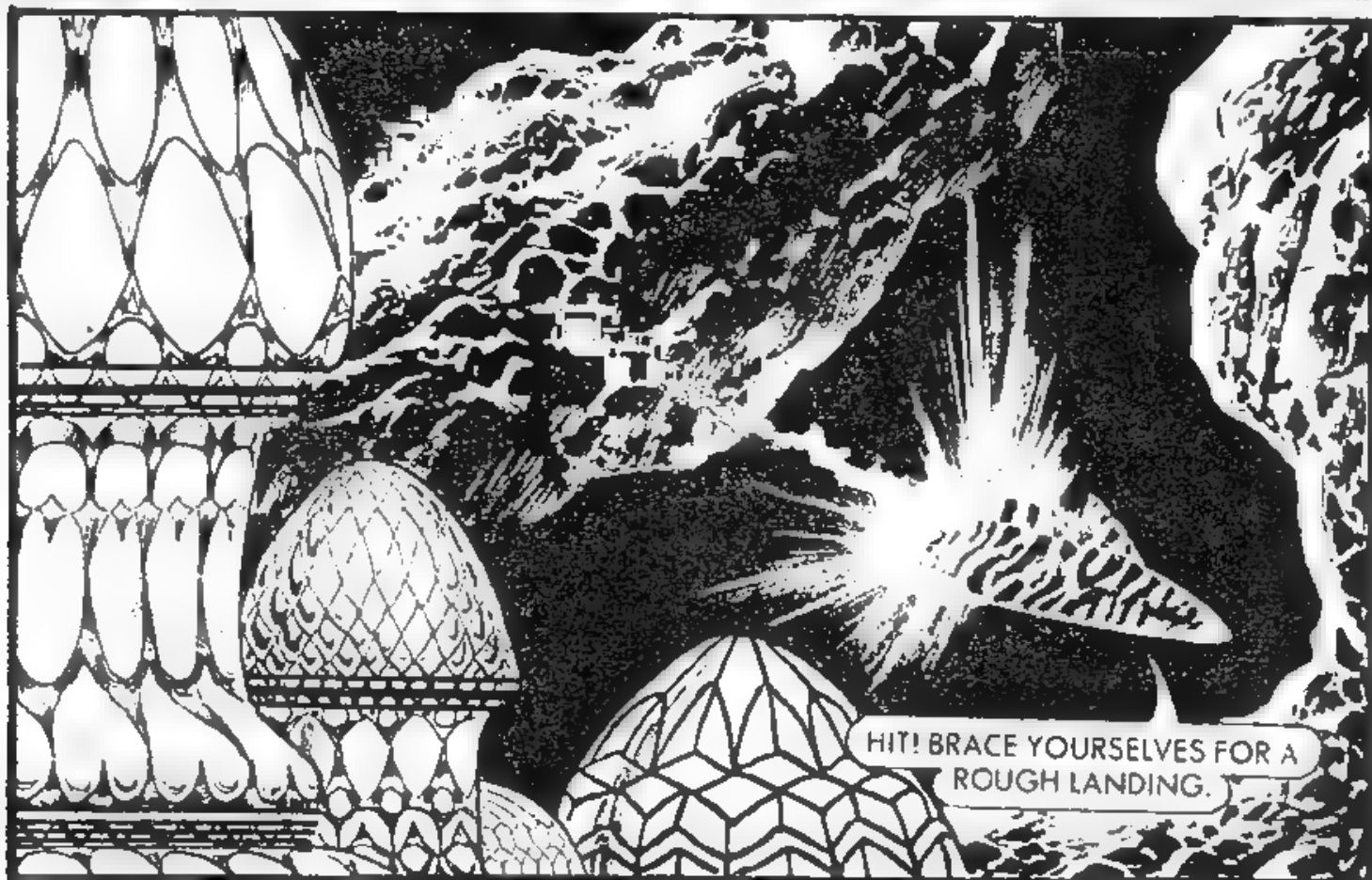
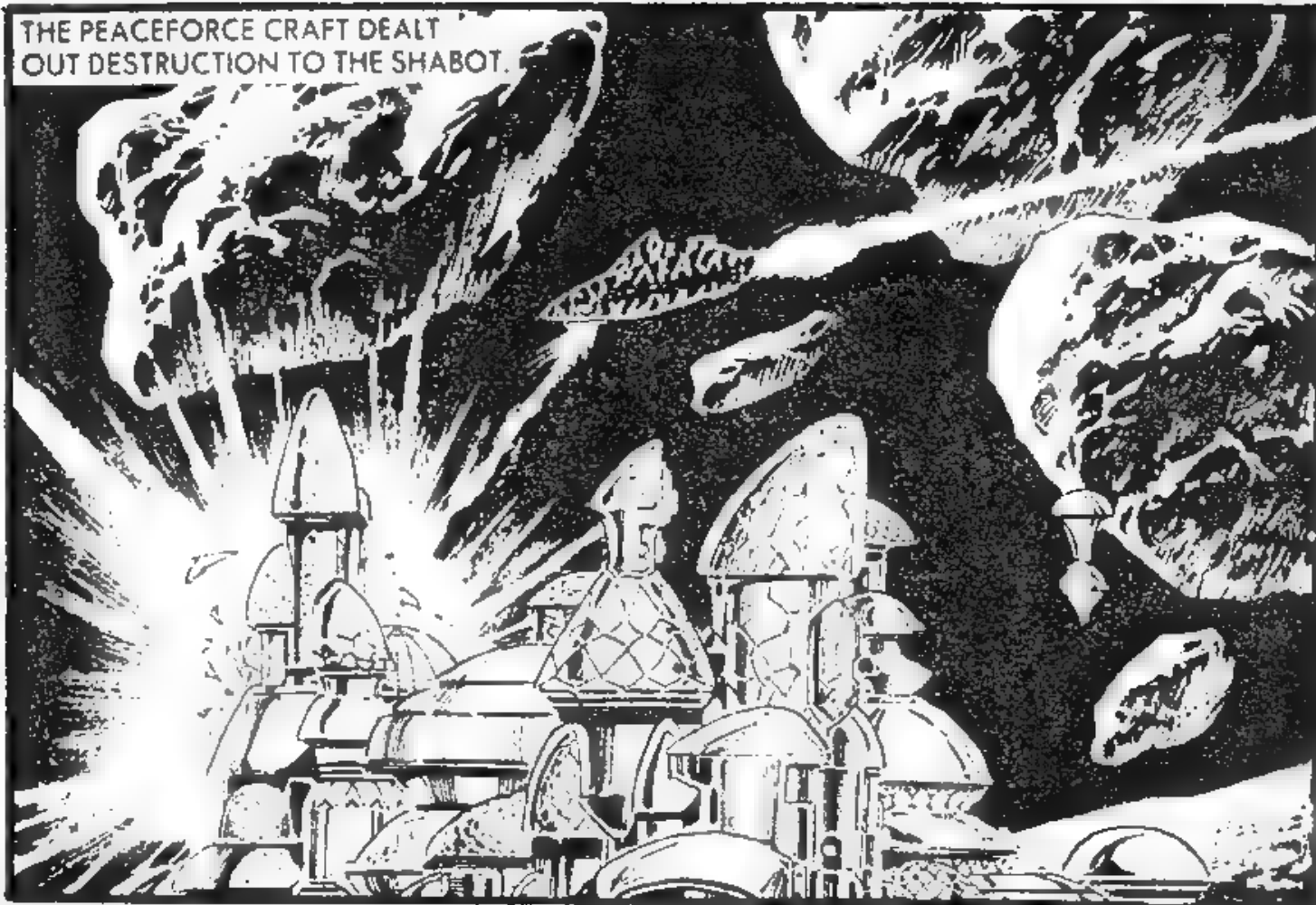


THEY'VE TUMBLER TO US. IT'S NOT
HEALTHY HERE. BLAST OFF . . . FULL ASTERN.



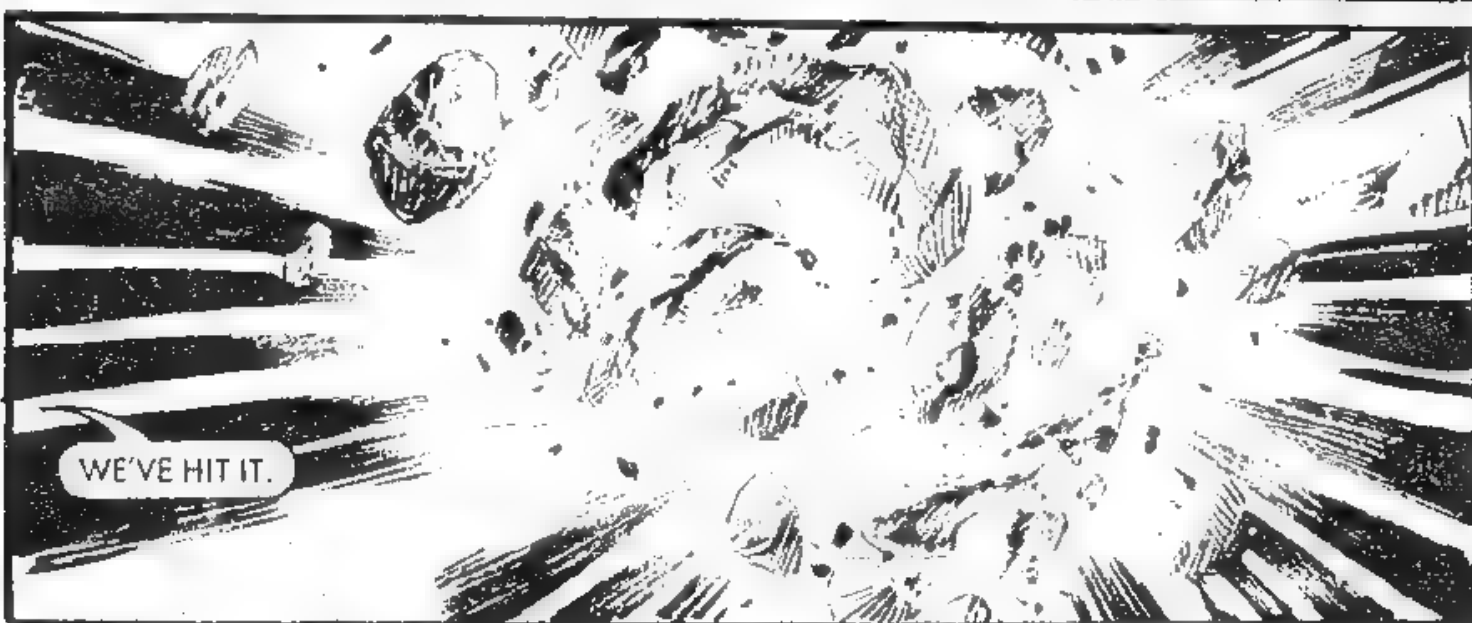


THE PEACEFORCE CRAFT DEALT
OUT DESTRUCTION TO THE SHABOT.



HIT! BRACE YOURSELVES FOR A
ROUGH LANDING.

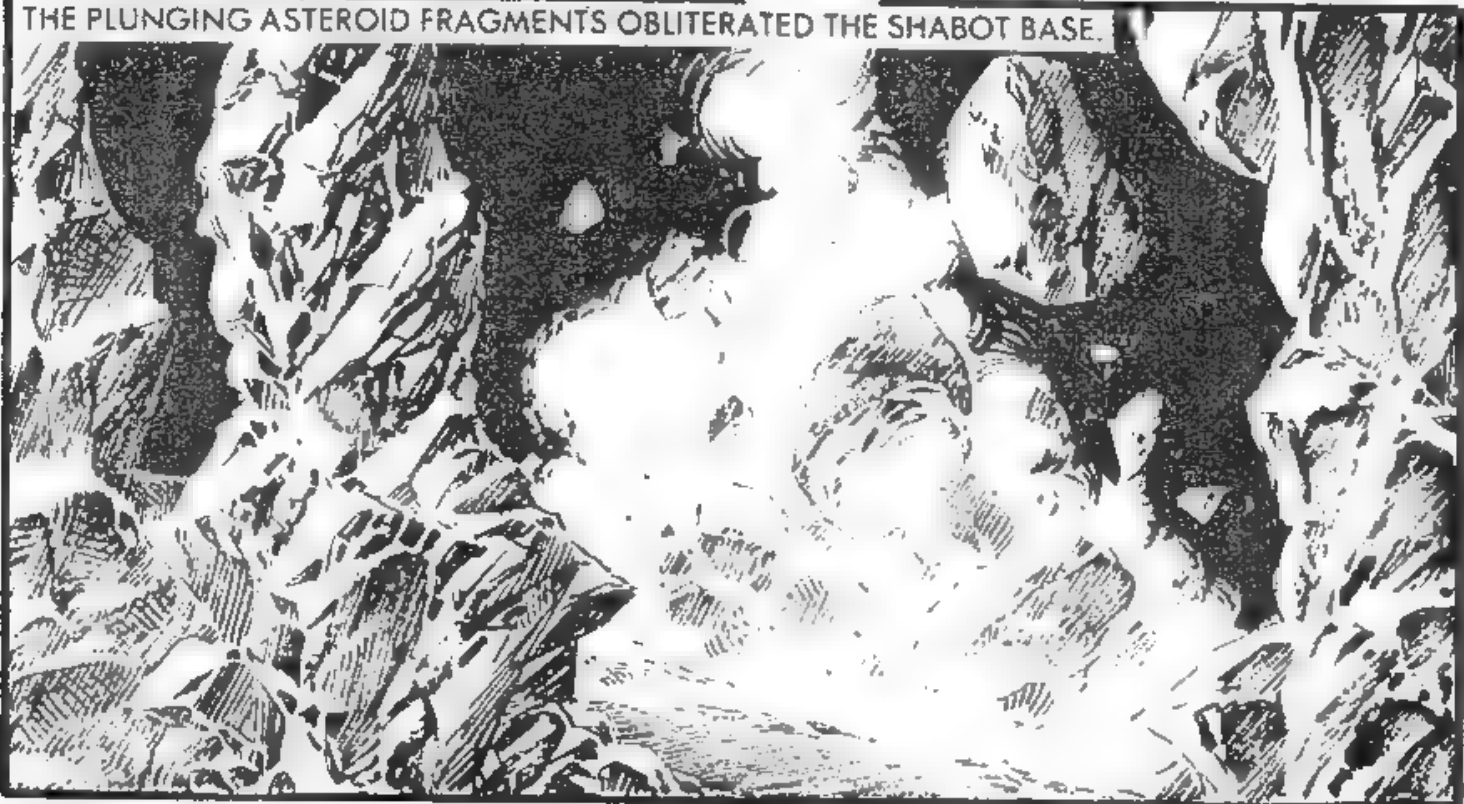
THE CRIPPLED CRAFT SKIDDED TO A HALT —



THE ASTEROID PLUNGED TOWARDS THE GROUND, CAUSING PAINFUL ATMOSPHERIC AND GRAVITATIONAL CHANGES.



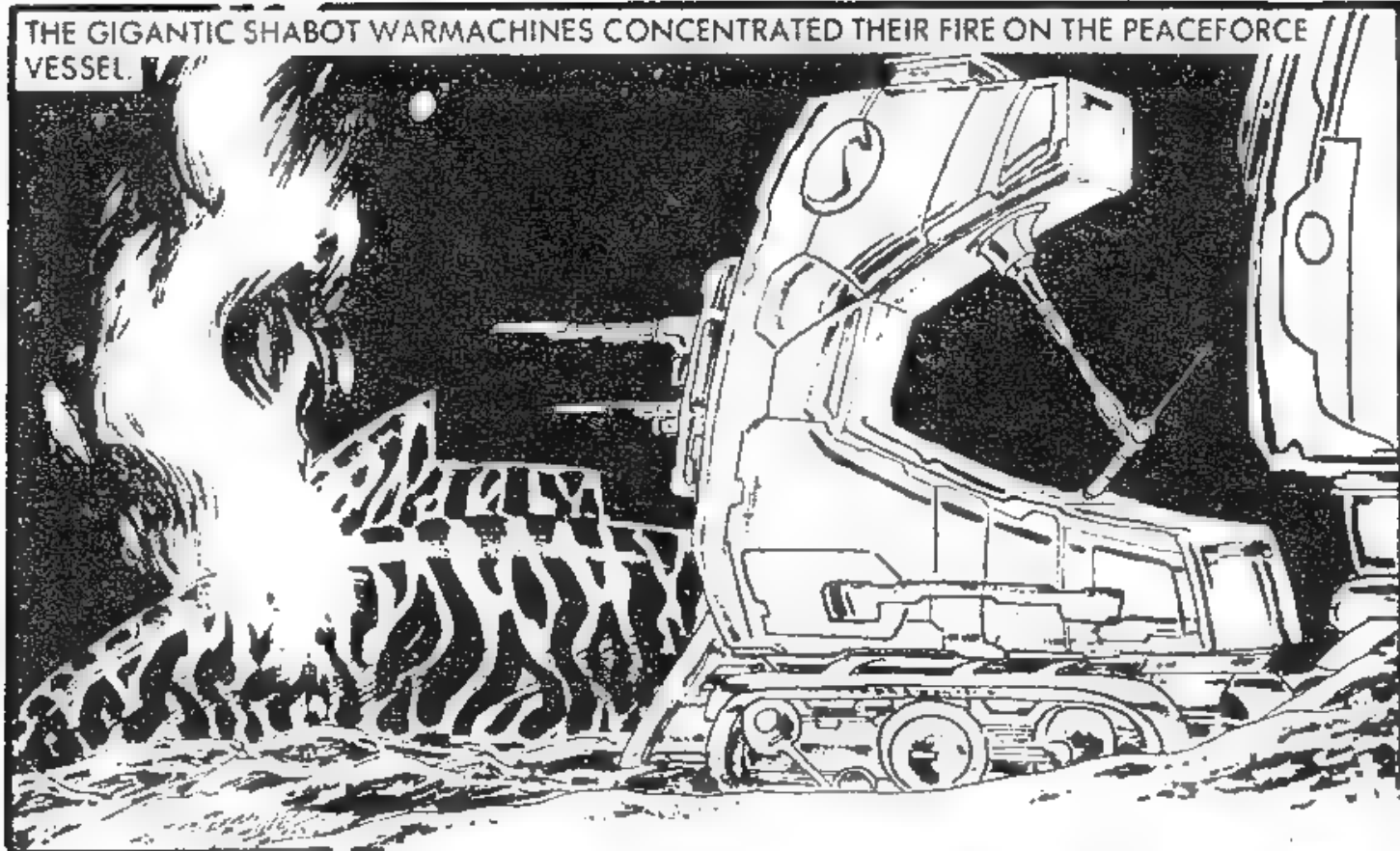
THE PLUNGING ASTEROID FRAGMENTS OBLITERATED THE SHABOT BASE.



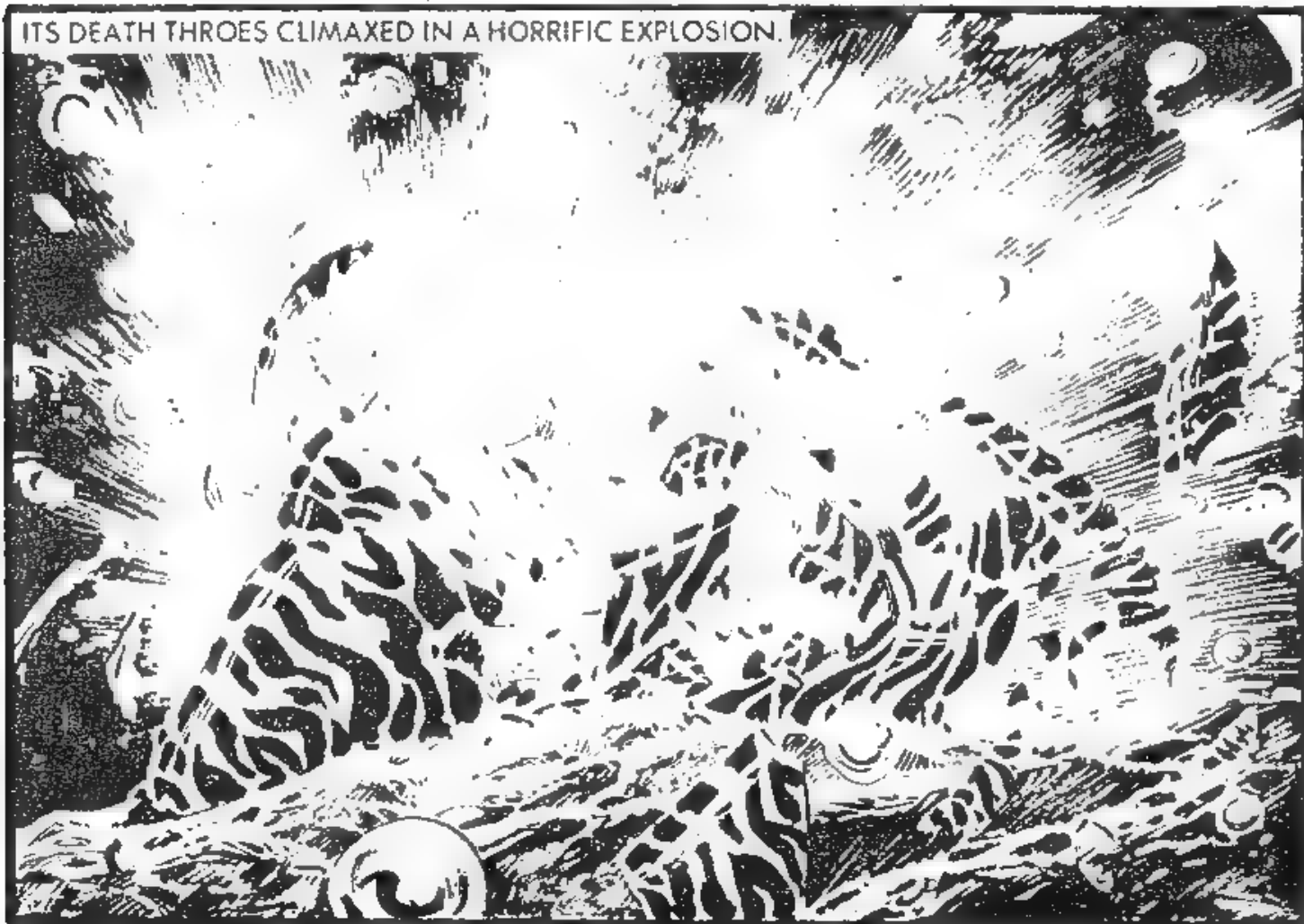
ABANDON SHIP! NO TIME FOR REPAIRS. IF WE CAN REACH THAT OTHER BASE, WE CAN TAKE A CRACK AT IT.



THE GIGANTIC SHABOT WARMACHINES CONCENTRATED THEIR FIRE ON THE PEACEFORCE VESSEL.

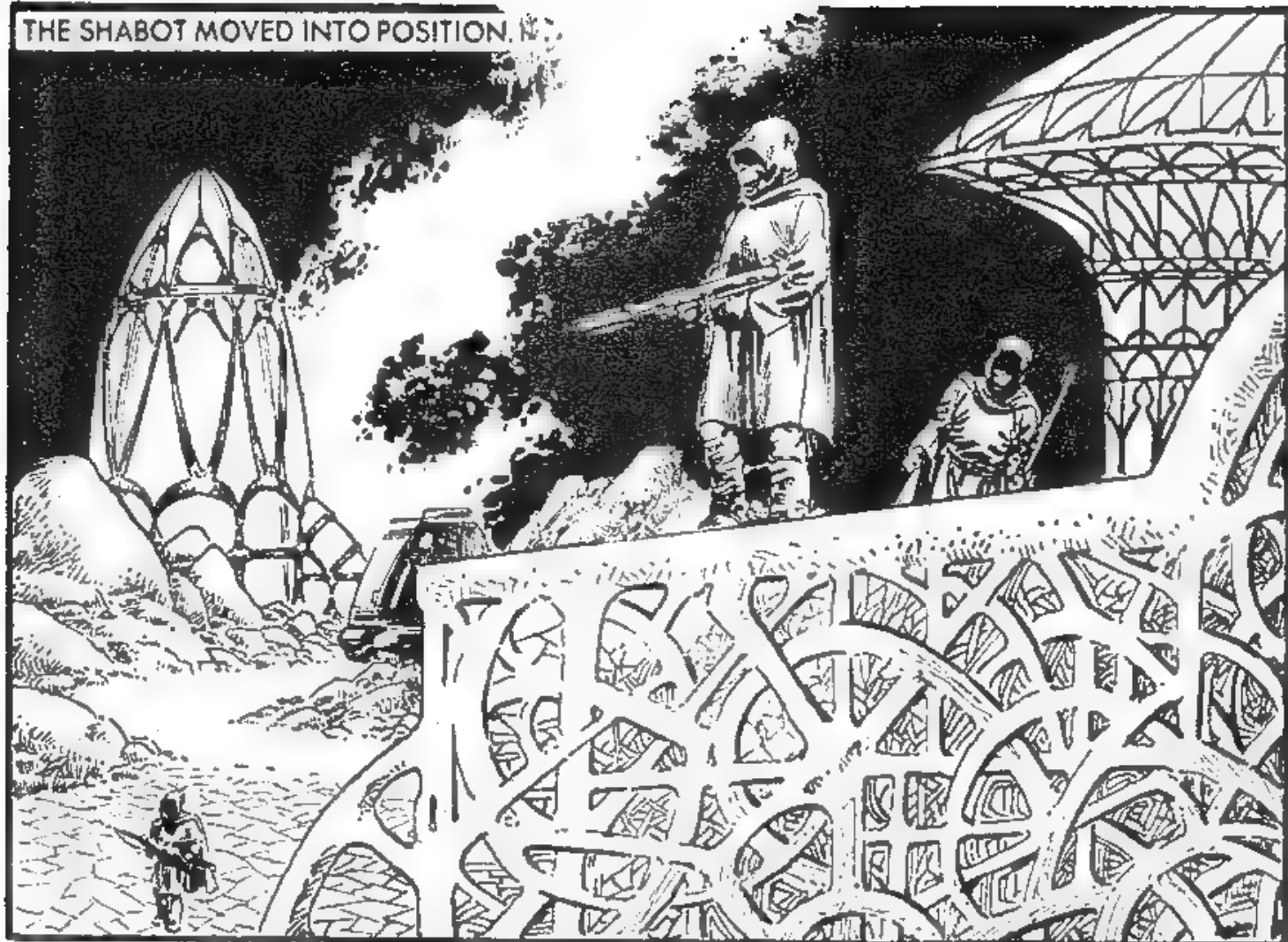


ITS DEATH THROES CLIMAXED IN A HORRIFIC EXPLOSION.

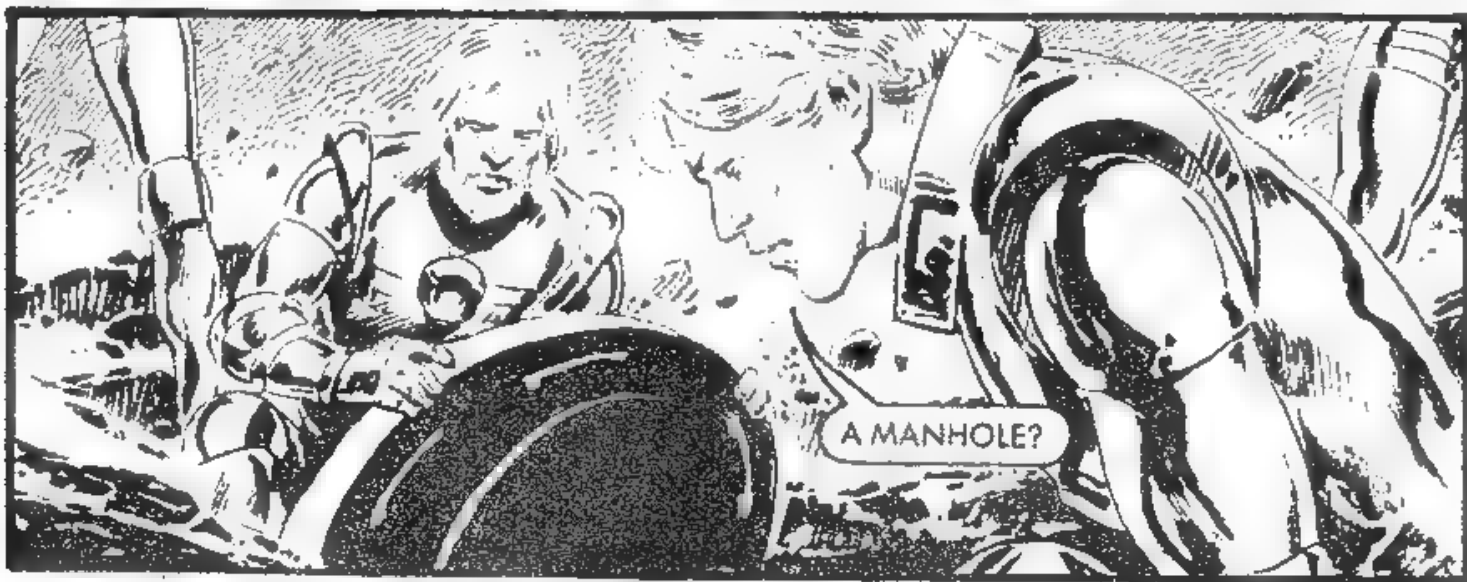




THE SHABOT MOVED INTO POSITION. N

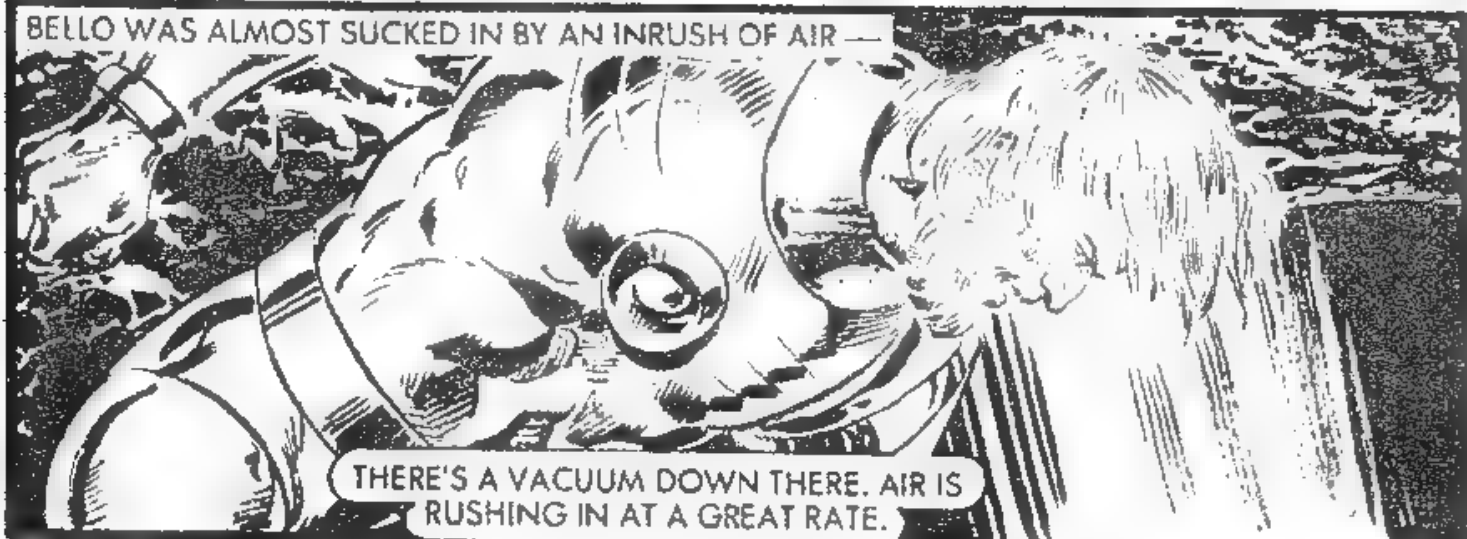


THE GROUND SHOOK VIOLENTLY —



A MANHOLE?

BELLO WAS ALMOST SUCKED IN BY AN INRUSH OF AIR —



THERE'S A VACUUM DOWN THERE. AIR IS
RUSHING IN AT A GREAT RATE.



AS THE AIR WAS SUCKED OUT, IT DRAGGED THE TRAIN ALONG.

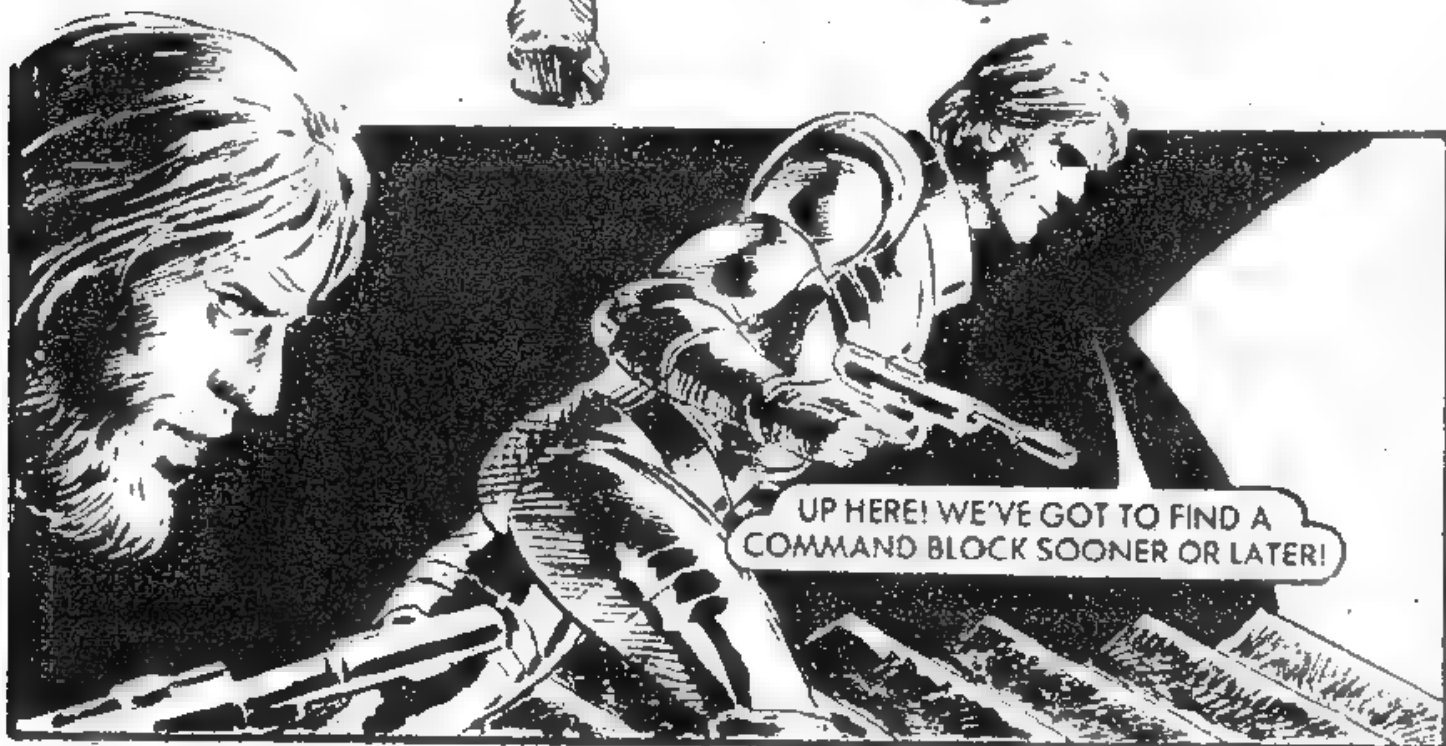
I WONDER WHERE
WE'RE GOING?

A FRICTION BRAKE BEGAN TO SLOW THEM DOWN.

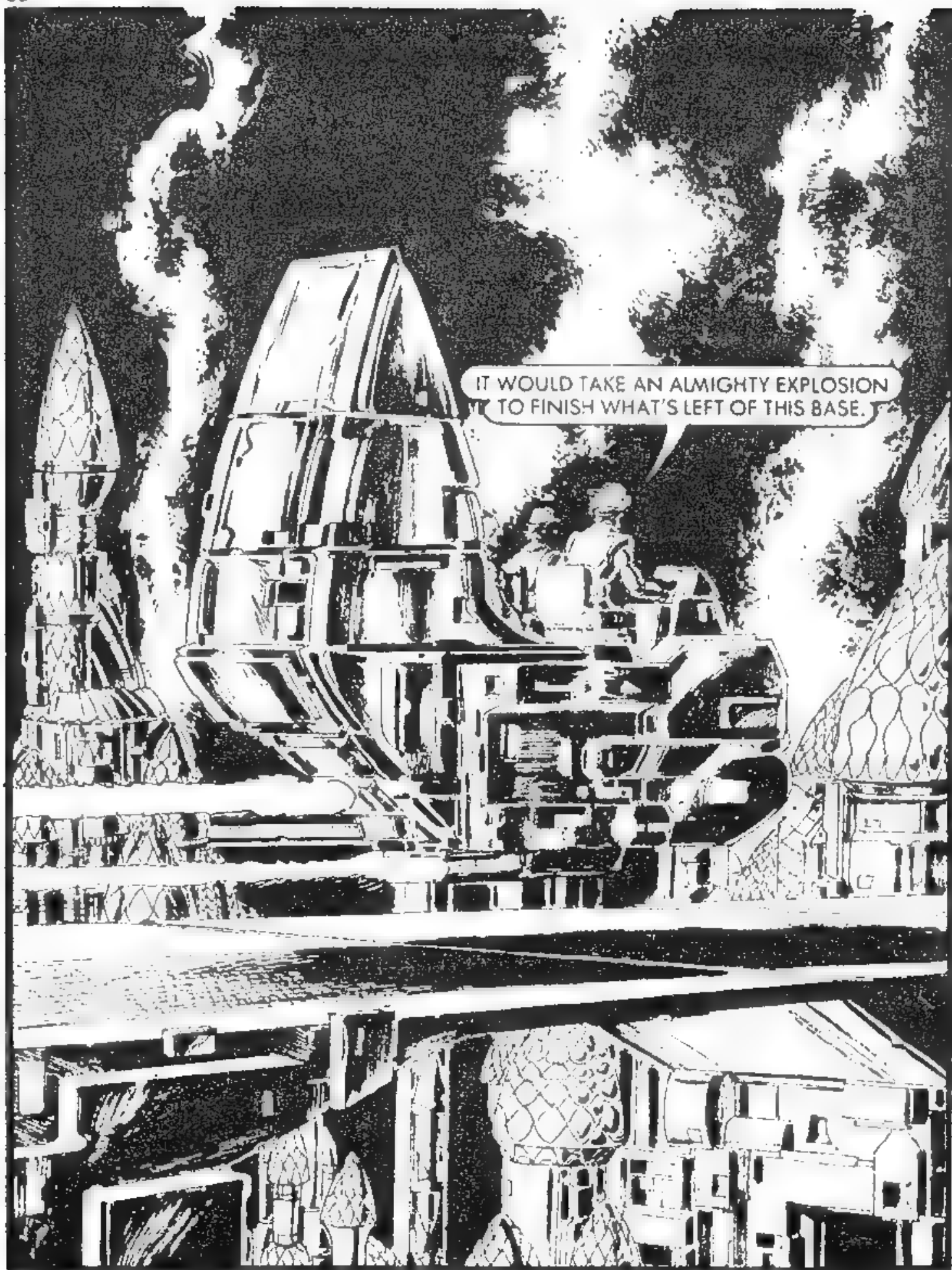
SHABOT! GET THEM!

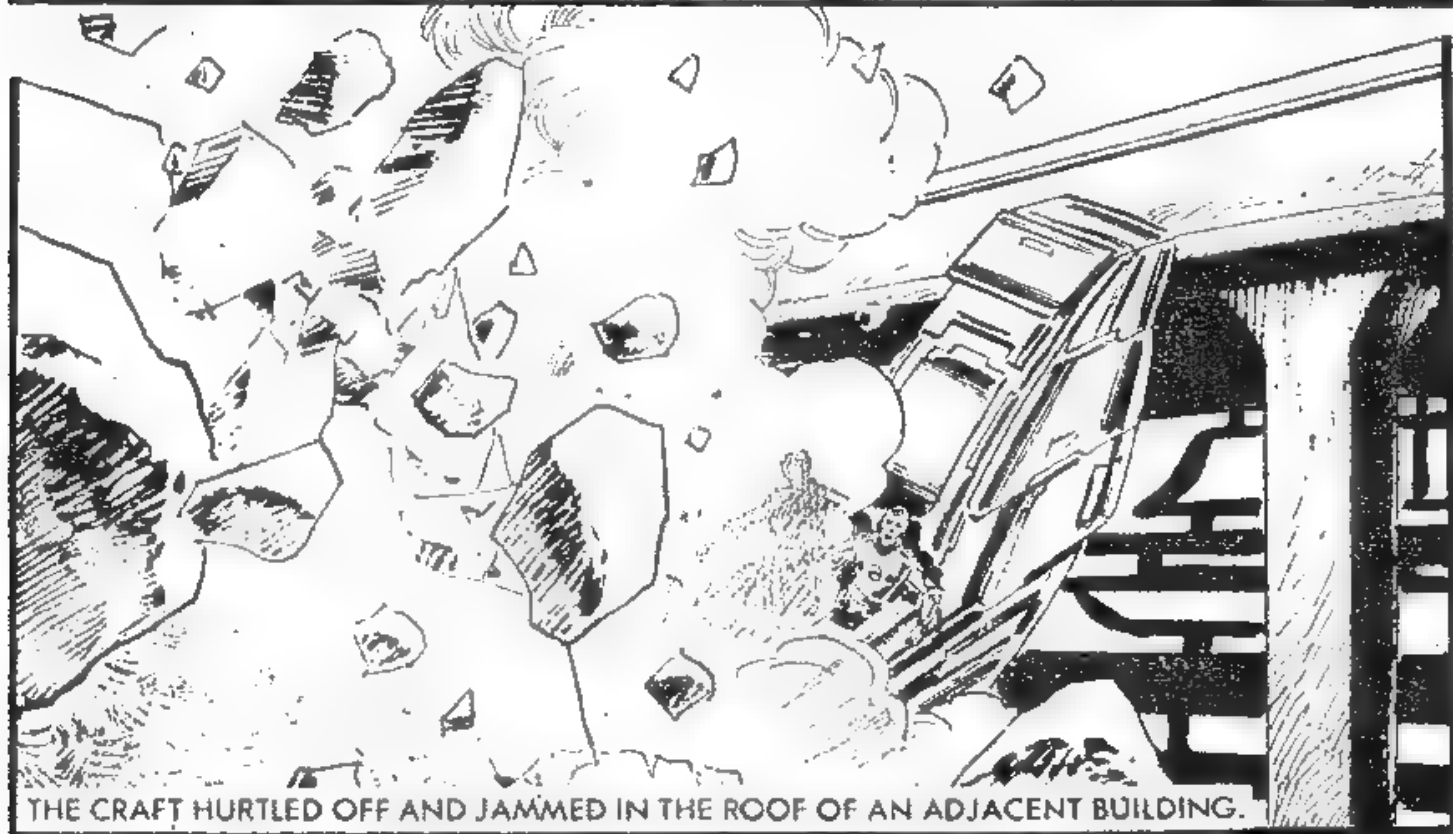
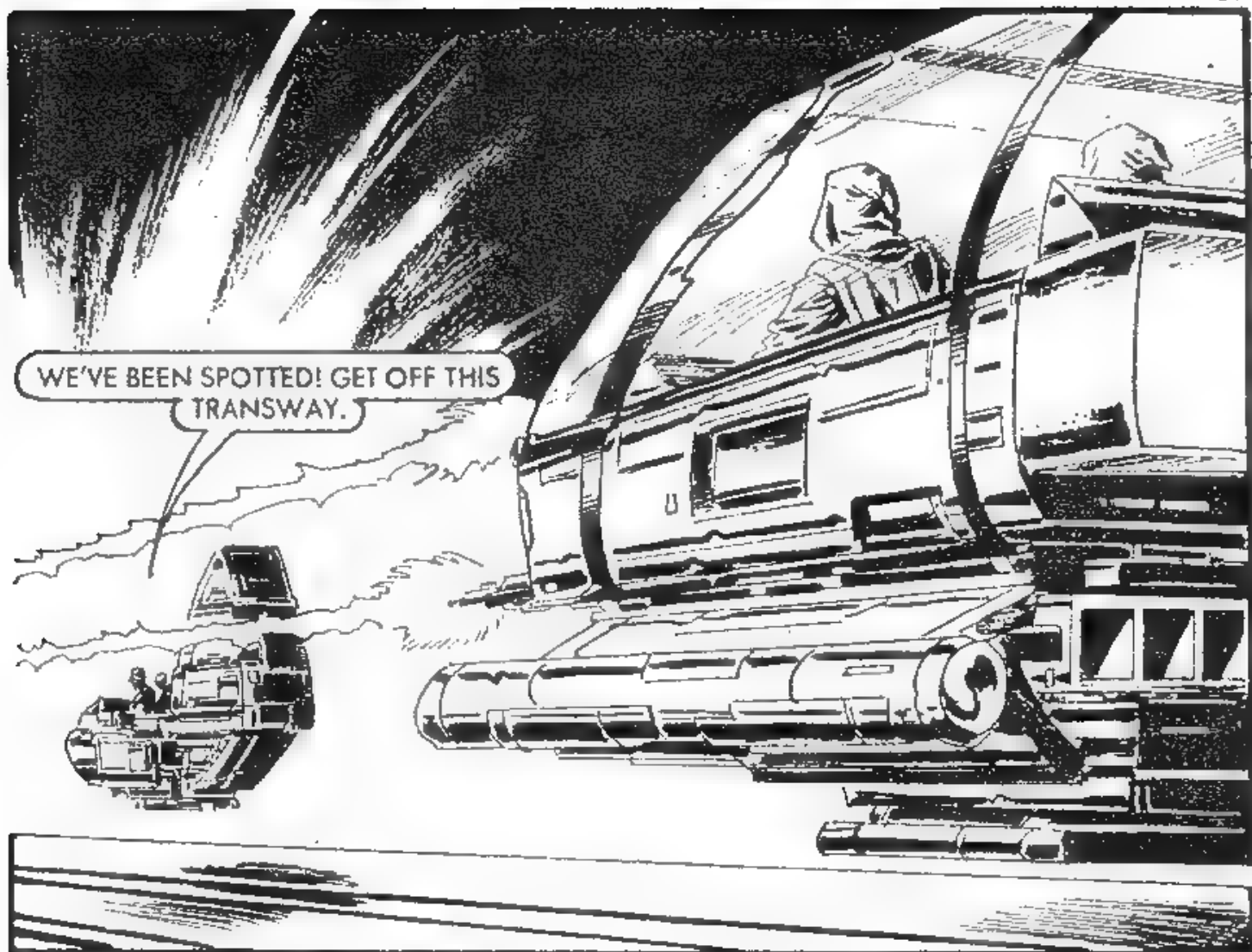


THE LUCKLESS SHABOT WERE SOON
DEALT WITH—





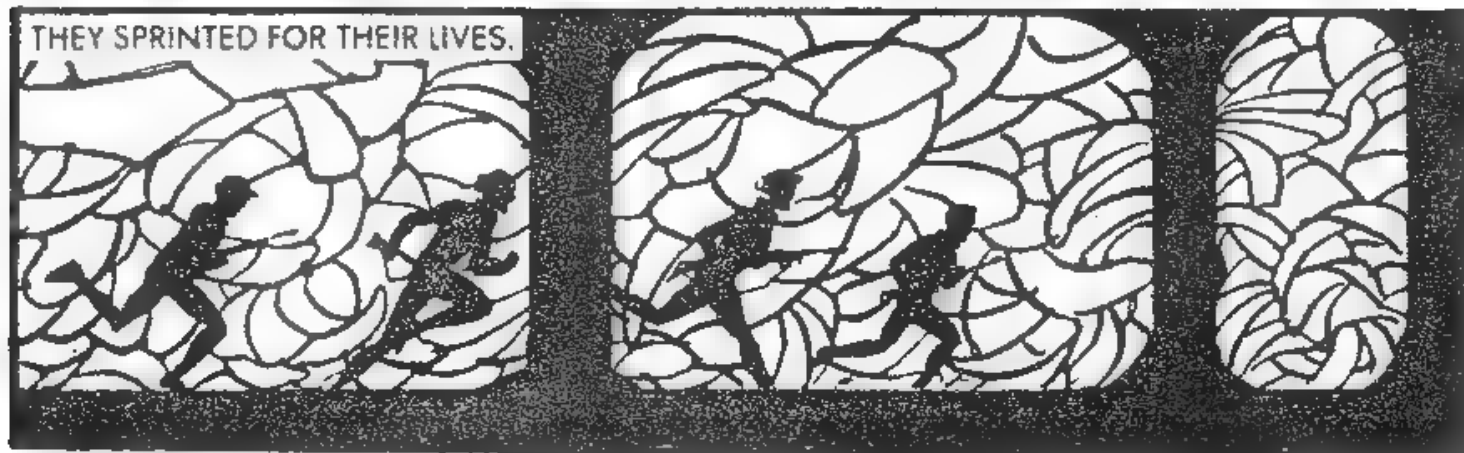




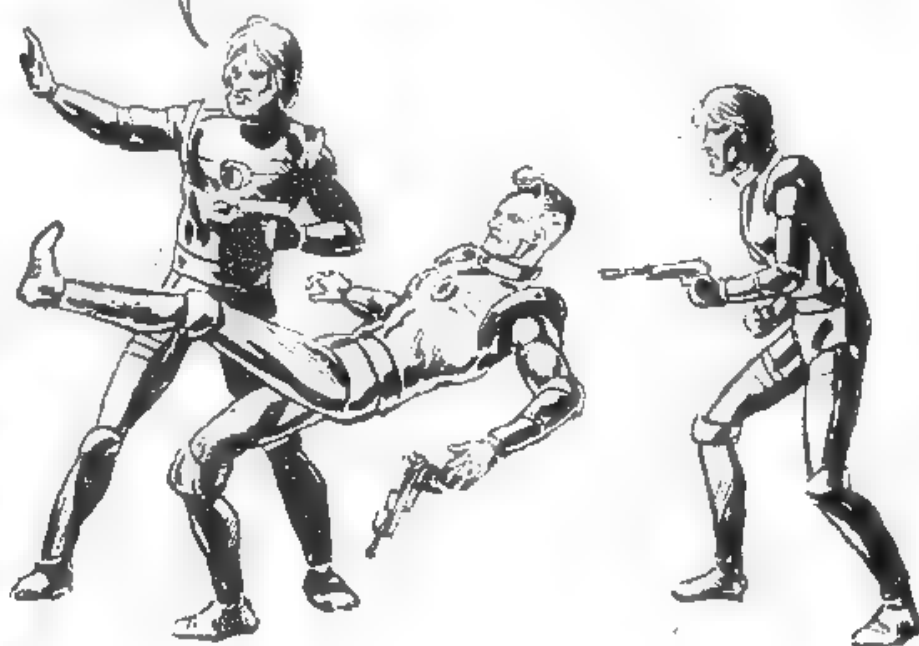
THE CRAFT HURTLED OFF AND JAMMED IN THE ROOF OF AN ADJACENT BUILDING.



THEY SPURTED FOR THEIR LIVES.



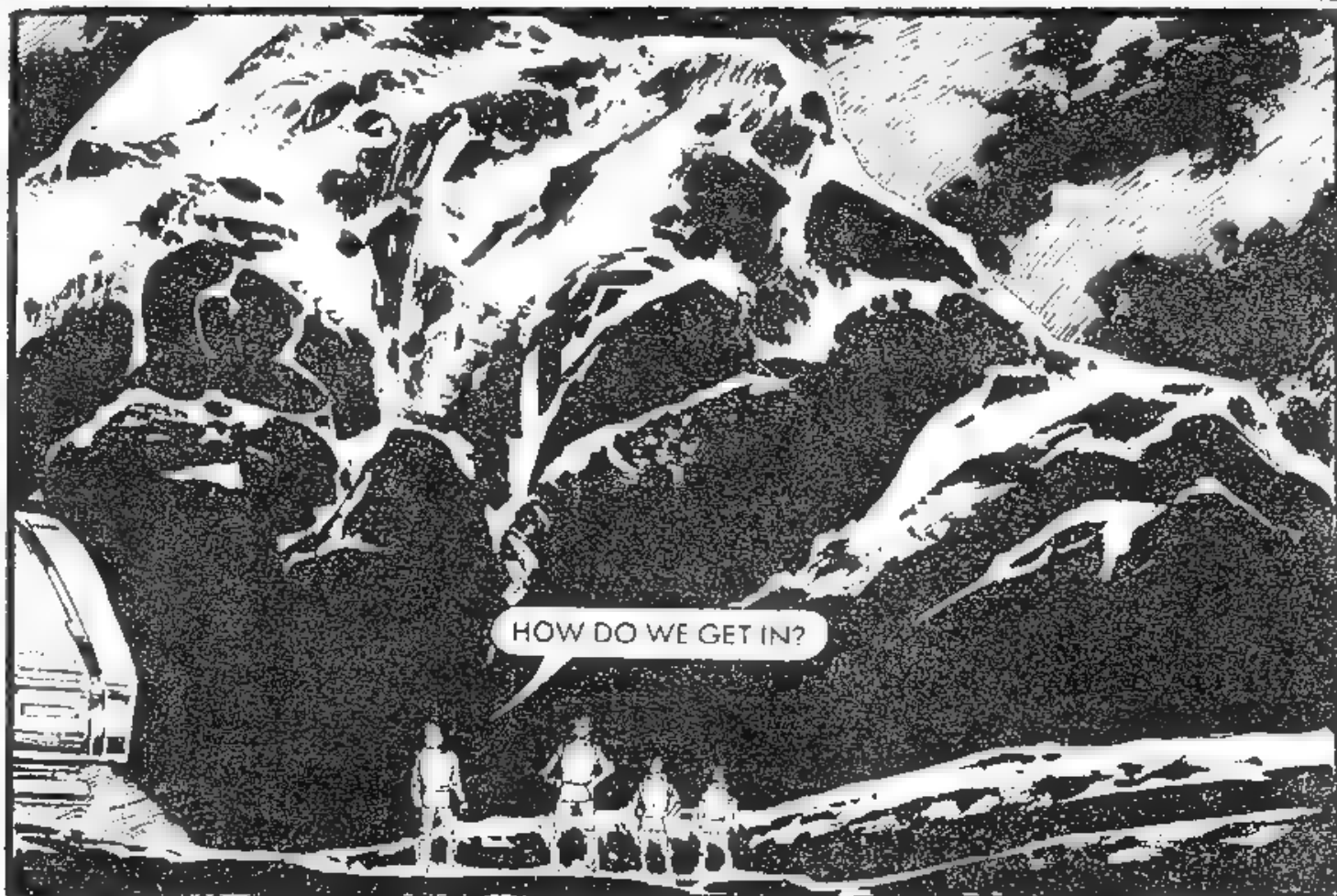
AN ELECTRONIC BARRIER.





THEY TOOK THE SHABOT'S TRANSPORT.





IT DIDN'T TAKE THEM LONG TO REACH THE CRASHED ASTEROID'S HOLLOWED INTERIOR.



ONE SHABOT WAS STILL ALIVE—



BUT BELLO REACTED FRACTIONALLY FASTER.

HE'S ONLY STUNNED ...
GRAB HIM.



ARE YOU THE ONLY ONE?

NO, TERRAN! THERE IS A NON-
MILITARY CREW IN THE FUSION
PIT.

THEY ARE NOT SOLDIERS! WE CAN'T
LEAVE THEM! FIND ONE OF THOSE
MOBILE CRANE DRONES. BRING THEM
UP ONE AT A TIME. TAKE NO CHANCES.



THANK YOU, EARTHMEN. YOUR MERCY WILL BE
REWARDED.



THEY HEADED FOR THE FUEL CONTROL CENTRE AFTER RELEASING THE SHABOT.

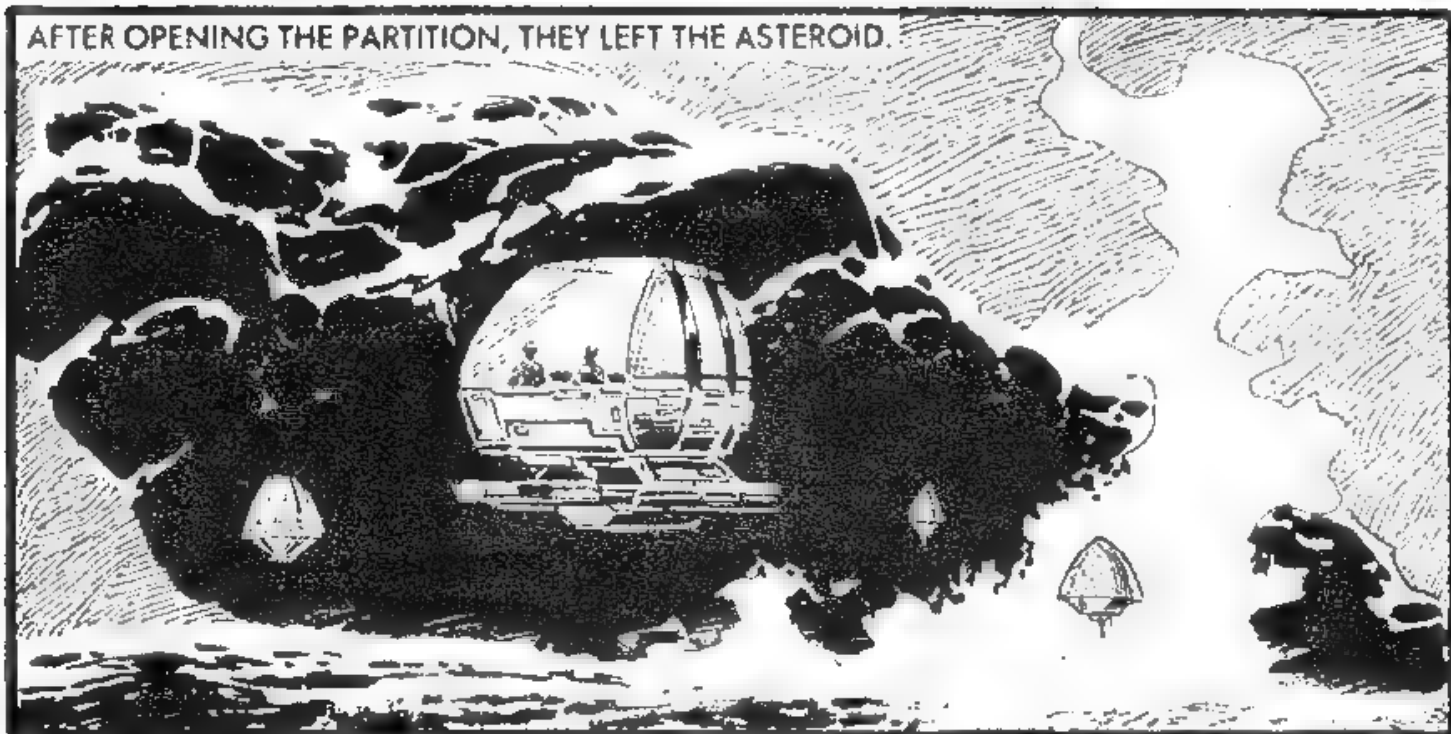
I THINK IT'S SAFE. SOMEONE HAS
OPERATED THE EMERGENCY PARTITIONING.

SO THE FUEL IN ANY ONE COMPARTMENT
CAN'T REACH CRITICAL MASS?

YOU AND BELLO SHOULD BE
ABLE TO OVERCOME THE
EMERGENCY PARTITIONING
SYSTEM. THEN DETONATE
THE FUEL.

IF THE FUEL BLOWS—THAT
SHOULD WIPE OUT THE TOWNBASE.

AFTER OPENING THE PARTITION, THEY LEFT THE ASTEROID.



THE SHABOT COMMANDER WAS STILL FOLLOWING THE PEACEFORCE MEN.

STILL NO SIGN
OF THE HUMANS?

NO, COMMANDANT. BY ELIMINATION—THEY
MUST BE IN THE ASTEROID. WE ARE GOING IN
NOW.

THE ASTEROID FUEL WENT CRITICAL, AND EXPLODED.



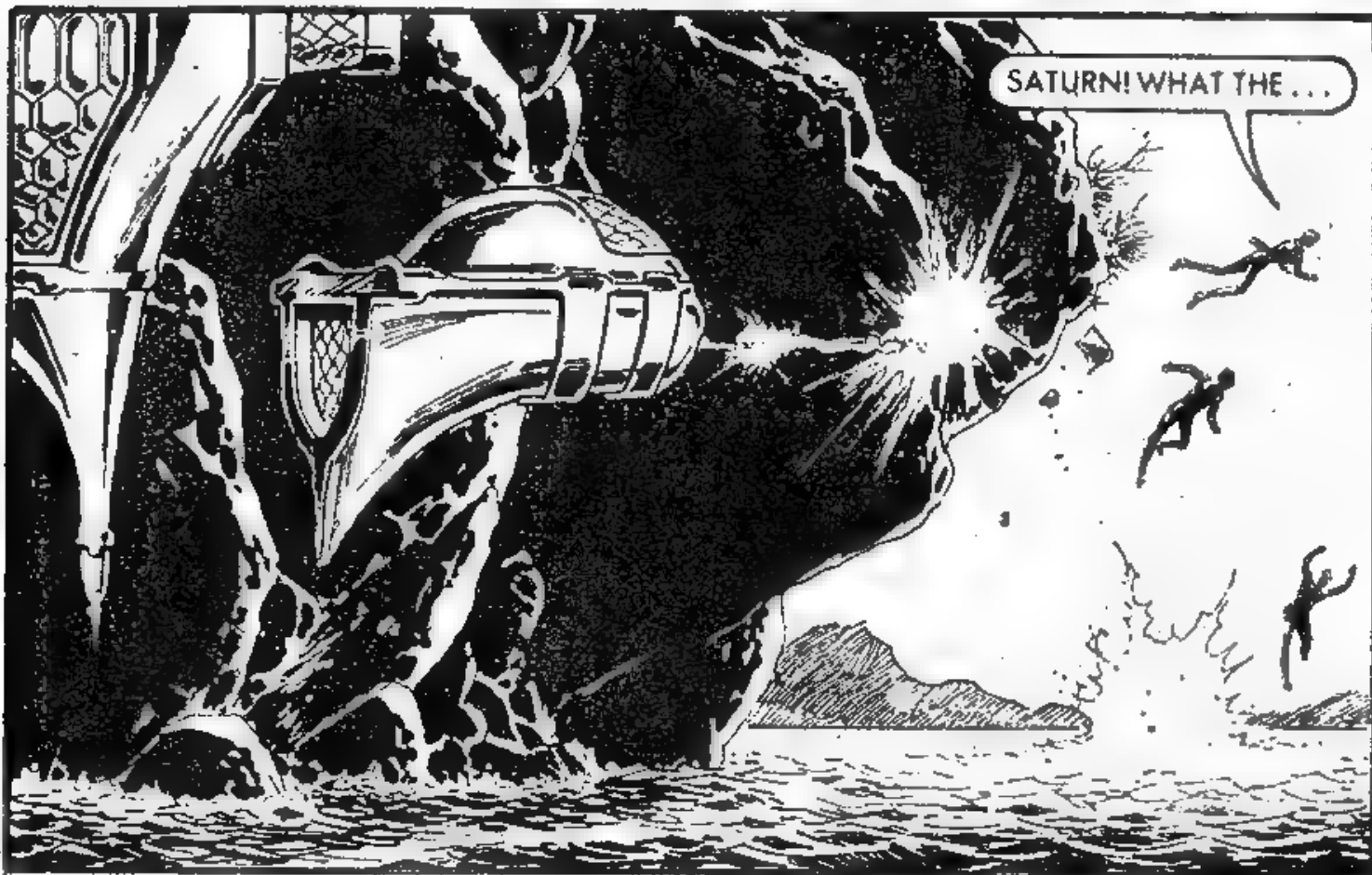
WITH THE NEWS OF THE PATROLS DECIMATION, SHABOT TROOPS SET OUT IN FORCE TO SEEK VENGEANCE.



WHEN THEY BRING UP SOPHISTICATED SENSORS
THEY WILL DETECT US EASILY.



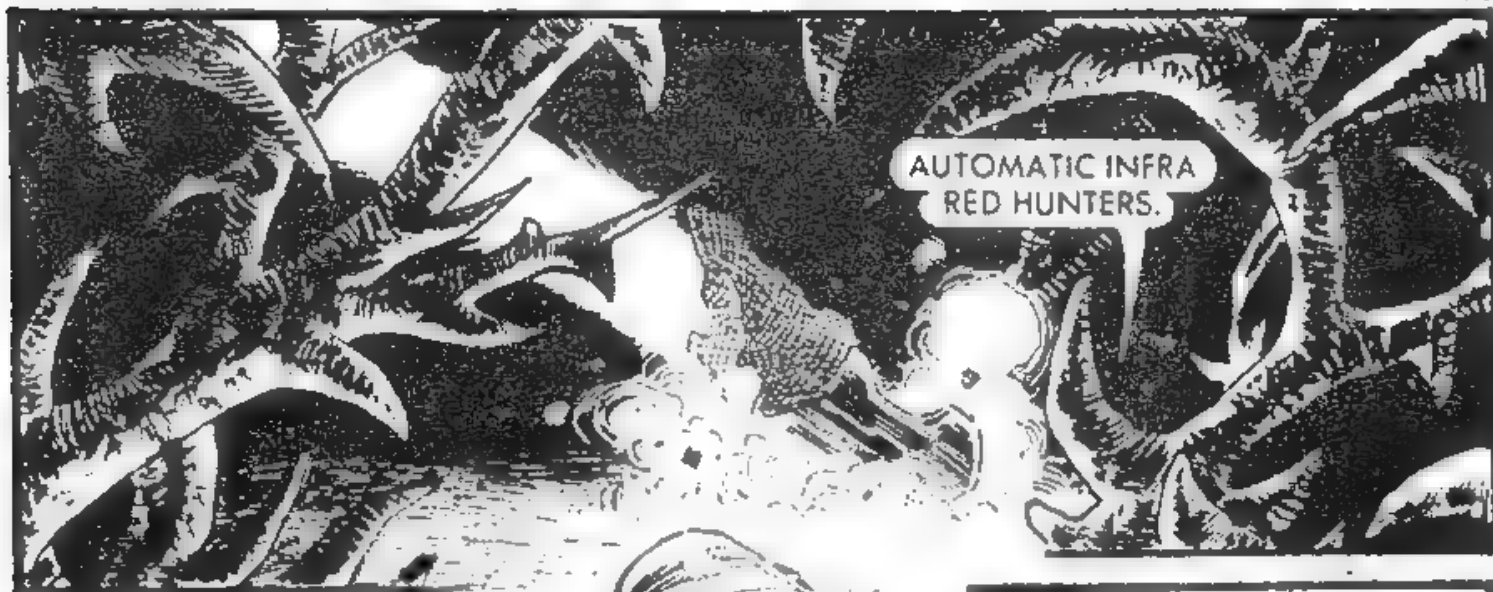
SATURN! WHAT THE ...



ONLY AT NIGHTFALL COULD THEY LEAVE THE SAFETY OF THE WATER.

BUT EVEN IN DARKNESS THEY WEREN'T SAFE —





AUTOMATIC INFRA
RED HUNTERS.



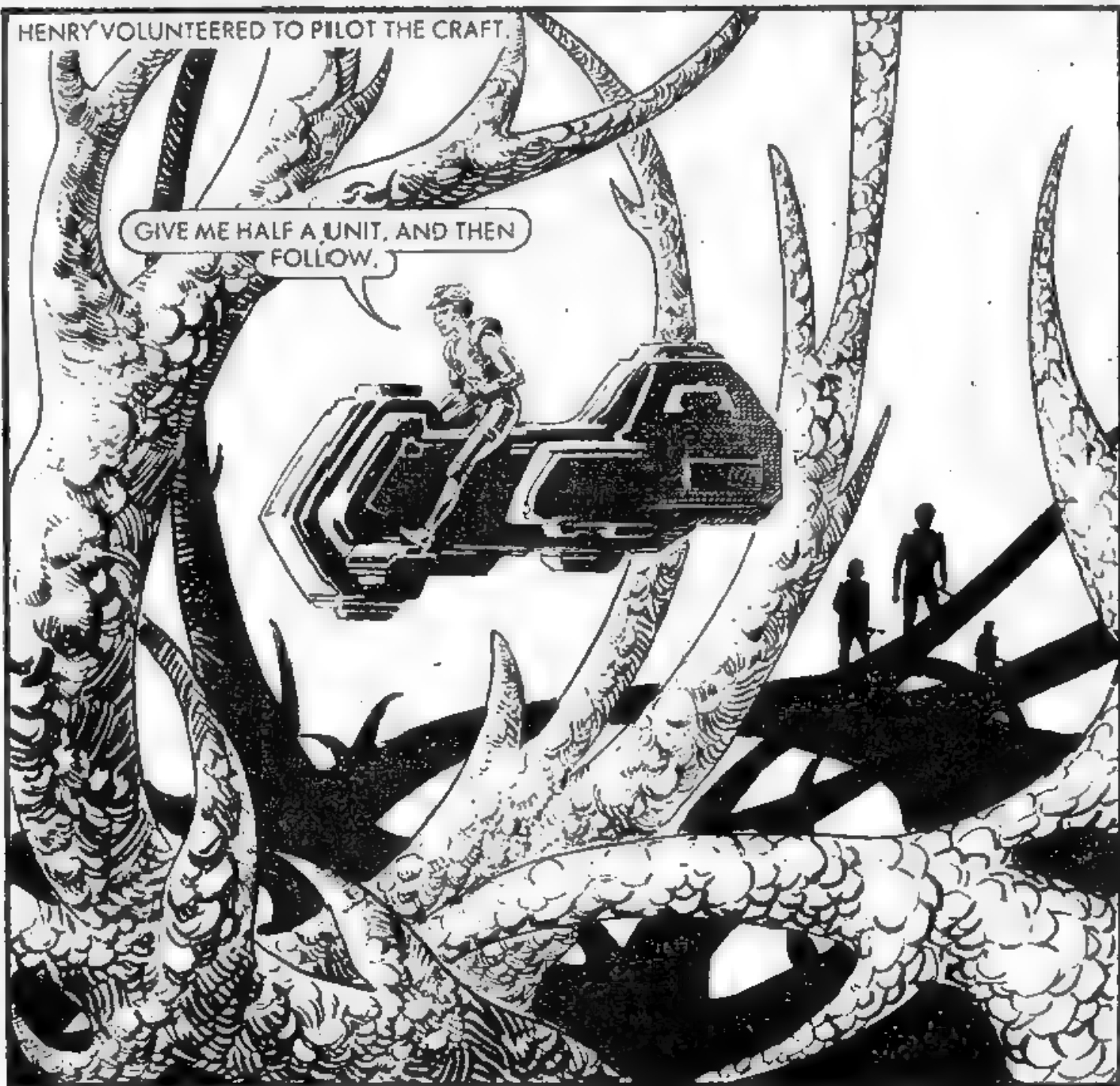
IT'S INTACT! ONLY THE INERTIA GUIDANCE
SYSTEM HAS GONE!



THIS'LL GET ONE OF US INSIDE THE SHABOT
AERODEPOT ... THEN HOPEFULLY HE CAN LET THE
OTHERS IN.

HENRY VOLUNTEERED TO PILOT THE CRAFT.

GIVE ME HALF A UNIT, AND THEN
FOLLOW.



HENRY CAUSED A PANIC.



RIGHT ON TIME STEVE, BELLO AND GEE STORMED IN —

HEAD FOR
THAT BUILDING.



SOLOSCOUTS — THESE COULD BE
USEFUL. HOW'S HENRY?

HENRY HAD PINNED DOWN THE SHABOT. GUARD.





THEY BOARDED THE SOLOSCOUTS ...

FOLLOW ME!

... AND CAUSED HAVOC.

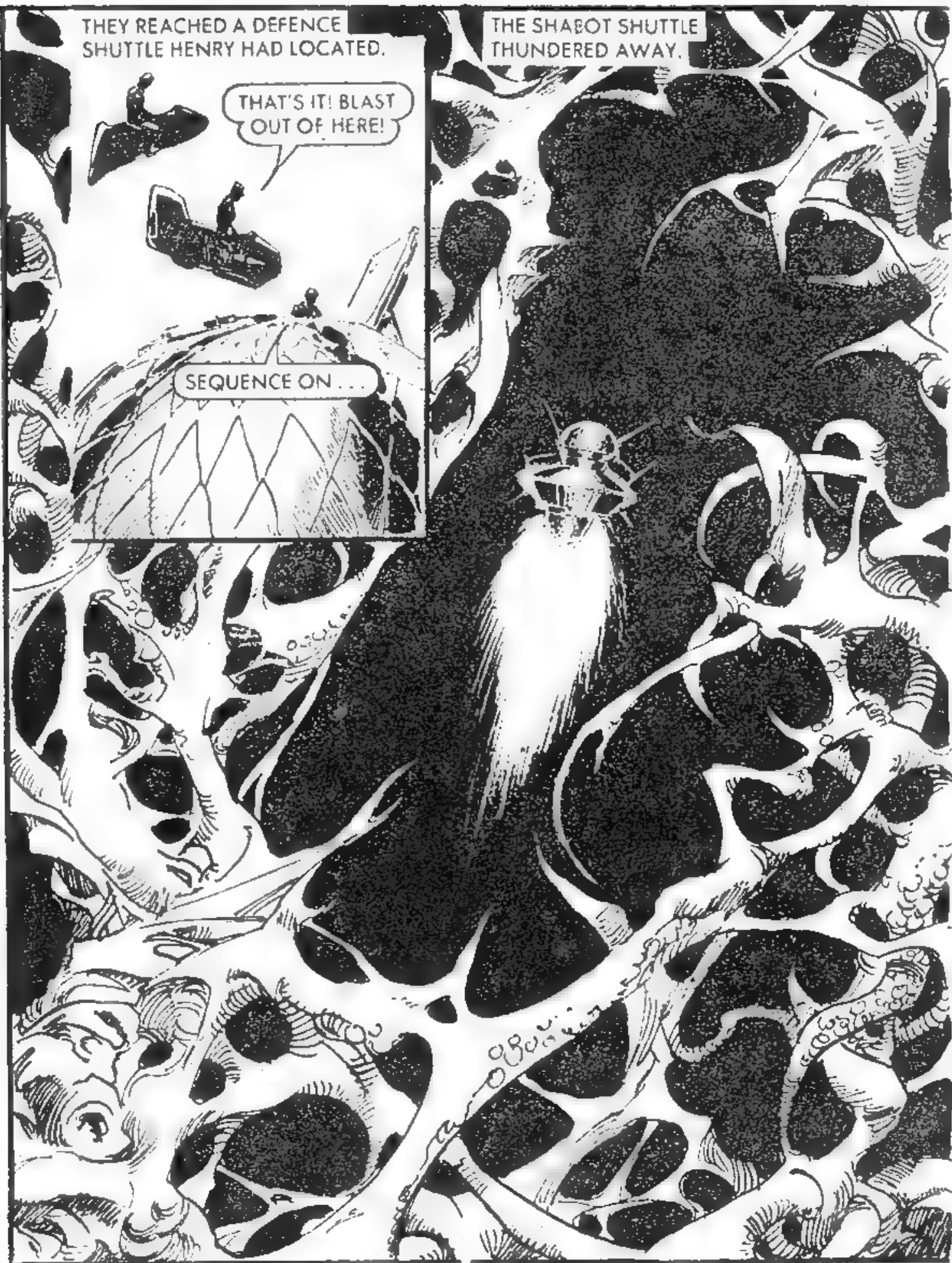


THEY REACHED A DEFENCE
SHUTTLE HENRY HAD LOCATED.

THAT'S IT! BLAST
OUT OF HERE!

SEQUENCE ON...

THE SHABOT SHUTTLE
THUNDERED AWAY.



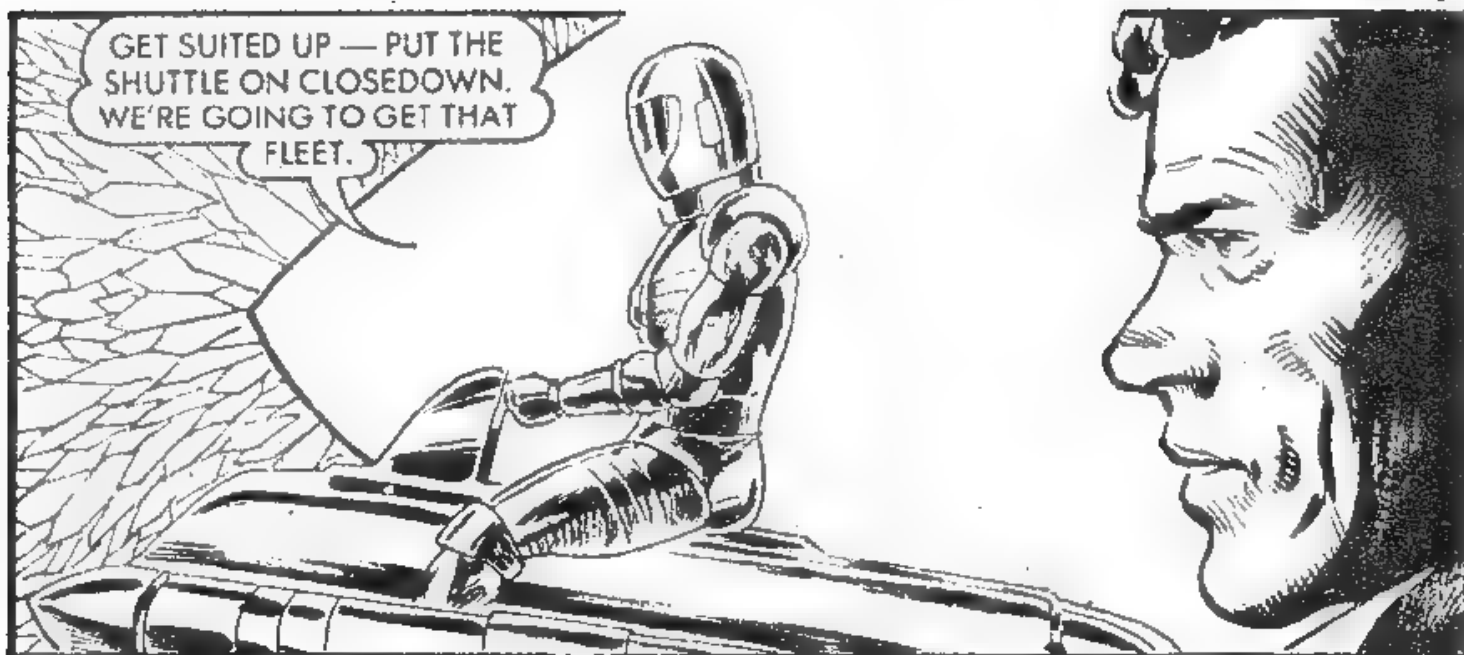
MISSILES, AND THEY'RE ARMED, BUT
WE CAN'T FIRE THEM. UNLESS WE
USE THE PODS.



FLEET AHEAD ... THEY'RE PREPARING
TO HYPER JUMP ... THEIR TARGET
MUST BE EARTH. WE CAN'T STOP THEM.

YES, WE CAN ...





THE FOUR SET OUT ON THE ULTIMATE SUICIDE MISSION.





BUT THE PROTON DEFENSIVE FIRE WAS INTENSE —

AAAA... SUIT'S GONE, STEVE! GOT 30 SECONDS TO LIVE. IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE KNOWING YOU.



AS THE SHADOW OF DEATH CREPT OVER BELLO, HE STEERED THE CRAFT INTO THE ASTEROID'S EXHAUST PORTAL.



SET HEATSEEKERS TO HOME IN ON BELLO'S EXPLOSION AND GET OUT OF HERE.



THAT'S IT AWAY. IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR
THE ENGINES TO OVERLOAD.



THE EXPLOSION CAUSED SHOCK WAVES TO UPSET THE BALANCE OF OTHER ASTEROIDS' ENGINES, AND THE CHAOS WAS TOTAL AS THEY BLEW UP.



AS RIPPLES OF DISSIPATED ENERGY COURSED AWAY TO INFINITY, STEVE LOOKED BACK.


GOODBYE, BELLO. HENRY... GEE,
BACK TO THE SHUTTLE.

BACK ON THE SHUTTLE —

GOOD WORK, MEN. ONLY
ONE CASUALTY AS WELL.
REPORT TO BASE IV FOR
YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT.

THAT "ONE CASUALTY"
WAS A FRIEND. KEEP YOUR
STINKING WARS. WE
RESIGN... OR DESERT. IF
YOU WANT US, YOU'LL
HAVE TO FIND US FIRST.

AS THE SHABOT SHUTTLE WARPED FROM PEACEFORCE'S SCREENS —



YOU GO, STEVE MARTIN,
HENRY AND GEE, BUT YOU
WILL BE BACK TO DO THE
DIRTY WORK IN THESE
STINKING WARS. BELLO TOO
WAS A FRIEND OF MINE —
IF FATHER AND SON CAN BE
CALLED FRIENDS?

DON'T FORGET TO READ THIS MONTH'S

OTHER

STARBLAZER

SPACE ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 74

KILLER
CLONES

ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSAGENT'S

STARBLAZER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

URSA MAJOR AND MINOR

The constellations of Ursa Major (Great Bear) and Ursa Minor (Little Bear) are the two best known in the Northern Sky. The seven brightest stars of Ursa Major form The Plough. Two of the stars Merak and Dubhe point almost directly to Polaris (The Pole Star)—celestial north—which is the brightest star in Ursa Minor.

